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and believe me, dear Sir,
as ever yours very sincerely
J. Fenimore Cooper

HISTORY
OF
THE NAVY
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

^{AMES}
BY J. FENIMORE COOPER.
₁₈₄

CONTINUED TO 1853.

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PREFACE.

THE author of this History of the Navy of the United States, in submitting a new edition to the decision of the public, has endeavoured to make it as accurate, as further investigation, and increased means of acquiring information will allow. The writer of a work of this particular character has two great sources of facts to distrust, and in some measure to resist: the partialities of personal friends and connections, who so often regard merit with the exaggerations of private feeling, and the strong disposition there is in all communities, to countenance self-esteem, even at the expense of truth. These difficulties have been kept in view, and it is hoped that this book is as free from errors derived from such weaknesses as can well be expected, under the ordinary failings of humanity.

It would be much easier to write a book on the subject of the navy, that should meet the longings of national vanity, than to write one which shall meet the requirements of truth. The country is filled with false and exaggerated statements concerning the exploits of both its army and its navy, and the author who should choose to accept them for facts, would have no difficulty in referring to his authorities, though they would be authorities entitled to little respect. The author has preferred to make an effort to obtain the truth, and, while he still admits his liability to fall into error, he hopes that a nearer approach to that desirable quality has been made in this, than in either of the previous editions.

The new matter introduced into this edition, has been obtained from sources that are believed to be authentic. It is considerable in amount, and in several instances of importance; though so much dispersed through the two volumes, as probably to escape the attention of cursory examination. As instances of its value, we refer to the capture of the Hancock, 32, during the war of the revolution; to the loss of the two sloops on Lake Champlain, in 1812; to that of the two schooners on Lake Ontario, in 1813, and to several other similar events. The corrections in dates and minor incidents, will not be apt to strike the eye at first, but the importance of accuracy in such matters will be readily admitted.

It is repeated, that exaggerations, whether of fact or manner, have been regarded as out of place in history. The navy of this country does not stand in need of such assistants, to command the esteem, or the admiration of the world. From the hour when it was first called

into existence, during the arduous struggles of a most important revolution, down to the present moment, its services have been material and brilliant, and he is but an equivocal friend who shall attempt to conceal its real exploits behind the veil of flattery. Such expedients may serve a purpose, and answer for a time; but, in the end, the truth will be certain to assert, and to recover, its ascendancy.

As an instance of what is meant, the reader is referred to the account of the loss of the *Intrepid*, before Tripoli, in the year 1804. Popular delusion, in this instance, has been supported by evidence better than common, in supposing that Somers, and his gallant companions, blew themselves up. We think this an error, though it is an error into which Preble, himself, would seem to have fallen. That which we have believed we have not hesitated to record, and our statements must stand, or fall, by the evidence and reasoning that have been adduced in their support. Without entering into the discussion of the question of how far any man would be justified in destroying himself, and those under his orders, to avoid capture, we have given what we regard as unanswerable proof that the ketch was in no immediate danger of falling into the hands of the enemy, when she blew up, and that the contingency which has been popularly urged as the justification of Somers' supposed self-destruction, had not even occurred.

In the instances of the victories of the *Constellation*, United States, Constitution, Lake Erie, &c., we have not hesitated to resist error on the subject of superiority of force, believing it to be a far higher duty to record that which we feel certain to be true, than to record that which may be momentarily agreeable. Conscious of having maintained a scrupulous impartiality on this subject, we wish to be judged by our whole work, and not by isolated instances, dragged from out the mass, by the desire of individuals to monopolise the renown of the entire service. We believe that the navy, itself, appreciates the justice of our course, while it both sees and feels the designs of those who have opposed it.

The country appears to be touching on great events. A war has commenced among us, which, though scarcely of a maritime character, in itself, must give extensive employment to the national marine, and may indeed demand, in the end, the exercise of all its energies. The Navy of the United States presents a very different aspect, in 1846, from that which it offered in 1815. Its existence has been trebled as to time, within the last thirty years, and its force increased fifty fold. Though far from being yet, what prudence would have dictated, and the wants of the republic actually demand, it can now bring its fleet into line, and exercise a most essential influence on the result of any conflict. As respects the navies

of this hemisphere, it is supreme ; the united marines of all the rest of this continent being unable to contend against it, for an hour. As respects the three great maritime States of Europe, though inferior to each in vessels, it can scarcely be called inferior to more than one of them in resources ; while in character, skill and hopes, it is second to no other service on earth. These are great changes, and all has been effected within the limits of a single life. What is to succeed in the last half of this century, may be dimly shadowed forth, by the aid of the images of the past. Divine Providence controuls all for its own great ends ; but, should its laws work as they have done for the last half century, the historian of the American Navy, who shall sit down to his labours in the year 1900, will have a task before him very different from that which has fallen to our share.

Cooperstown, 1846.

PREFACE TO THE CONTINUATION.

THE continuation of this work has been prepared from unfinished manuscripts, documents, etc., left by Mr. Cooper, and from other most reliable and authentic sources, published, documentary and personal. Free access has been had to the archives of the Navy Department, and to the papers of actors in some of the scenes recorded: in addition to which, the whole has been carefully revised, especially in the portions within their personal knowledge, by several officers of the Navy, whose familiarity with its history, as well as their age, rank and position, rendered their aid of the highest value.

Although the writer has aimed only at a plain narrative of facts, he has felt, with the members of Mr. Cooper's family who in the discharge of their responsibility have devolved the preparation of this edition upon him, that it was due to the subject and the author that no time nor pains should be spared to complete his design of making it a correct history of the navy to the present day.* With this view, and after careful research, it is hoped that no error or omission of consequence has occurred.

The first edition of the *Naval History* appeared in 1839, in two octavo volumes, which were immediately republished in London, Paris, and Brussels. Besides the subsequent reprints here of this edition, an abridgment was prepared by the author in 1841, omitting the documents and more elaborate reasoning. In 1846 he revised the unabridged work, correcting, condensing, rewriting in part, and adding considerable new matter. This copy, embracing the history to 1815, with his latest emendations, is followed in the present edition.

In 1851, having for some time accumulated materials, he commenced the continuation of the history; but, after preparing only the portion upon the Mexican war, which is designated in its place, he was interrupted by the illness which resulted in his death, Sept. 14, 1851.

Cooperstown, Sept., 1853.

* In addition to this work, Mr. Cooper is the author of two volumes of *LIVES OF DISTINGUISHED NAVAL OFFICERS*, to which, since his death, is added his history of the old ship *CONSTITUTION*, more familiarly known as *OLD IRONSIDES*.

Note to Edition of 1854.—Since the last edition (of Oct. 1853) a careful examination and comparison of the different editions of the main work, have led to the discovery and correction of various typographical errors, some of which materially affected the sense.

NAVAL HISTORY

OF THE

UNITED STATES.

CHAPTER I.

Expedition to Plymouth in the May Flower.....St. Sauveur reduced.....First deck vessel constructed.....First vessel built in Massachusetts.....Hugh Peters executed for high treason.....First sea fight of the American colonies.....First regular cruisers.....First regular naval combat.....Capture of New Netherlands.....First vessels on Lakes Ontario and Erie.....First depredations of the Buccaneers in American seas.....First attempt to suppress piracy.....Diving bell used.....Expedition against Port Royal.....against Quebec.....Sir William Phipps.....Launch of the Falkland. - - - - - *Page 13.*

THE empire of Great Britain, much the most powerful state of modern times, has been gradually and progressively advancing to its present high degree of maritime prosperity, and its actual condition ought to be considered the result of moral instead of physical causes, though the latter is probably the more prevalent opinion. Notwithstanding the insular position of its seat of authority, the naval ascendancy of England is of comparatively recent date; Spain, and even the diminutive communities of Portugal and Holland, manifesting as great, if not a greater spirit of lofty nautical enterprise than the islanders themselves, during the century and a half that succeeded the important discovery of the western hemisphere, and that of a passage by sea to India. While these three nations were colonising extensively, and laying the foundations of future states, the seamen of England expended their energies in predatory expeditions that were rapacious in their object and piratical in spirit. Familiar political causes, beyond a question, had an influence in bringing about these results; for, while the accession of the House of Hapsbourg to the throne of Spain and the Indies, created a power able to cope with Europe, as it then existed, England, driven entirely from her continental possessions, had Scotland for a troublesome neighbour, and Ireland for a discontented and turbulent subject, to check her efforts abroad. It is probable, too, that the civil contests, in which England was so long engaged, had a serious effect on her naval advancement, and the struggle that succeeded the dethronement of the family of Stuart, could not fail to lessen exertions that were directed to interests without the territory more immediately in dispute. As a consequence of all these causes, or of that portion of them which was in existence at the commencement of the seventeenth century, when England seriously commenced the business of colonisation,

Spain, France and Portugal were already in possession of what were then considered the most favorable regions on the American continent. When, indeed, the experiment was finally and successfully made, individual enterprise, rather than that of the government, achieved the object; and for many years the power of the crown was exercised with no other aim than to afford an ill-regulated, and frequently an insufficient protection. It was Englishmen, and not England, that founded the country which is now known as the United States of America.

It would exceed the proper bounds of a work of this nature, were we to enter into a detailed account of the events connected with the settlements in Virginia and Massachusetts. The first permanent establishment was made in the former colony, during the year 1607, and that at Plymouth followed in 1620. Nothing could be less alike than the motives which influenced the adventurers in these two enterprises, out of which has virtually arisen, within the short space of little more than two centuries, a Republic that has already taken its place among the great powers of Christendom, and which has only to be true to itself and to its predominant principles, to stand foremost in the ranks of nations. Those who cast their fortunes on the fertile shores of the waters of the Chesapeake sought worldly advancement for themselves, an affluence for their posterity, while the Pilgrims, as it has become usual to term them the parent stock of New England, landed in quest of an asylum, where they might erect their altars, undisturbed by the temporal power that profaned the rites of the church in the old world. Natural affinities attracted like to like, and for quite a century the emigrants from Europe partook of the distinctive traits of the original colonists; the one portion of the country being distinguished for the gay and reckless usages of successful pecuniary adventure, and the other for the more sobered and reflecting habits of severe moral training, and an industry that was stimulated by necessity and tempered by prudence. The distinction did not end here. If the one carried liberality and thoughtlessness to the verge of indiscretion, the other substituted fanaticism and bigotry for the mild and affectionate tenets of Christianity. It is not easy to say what might have been the consequence of the proximity of two establishments influenced by characters and modes of thinking so antagonist, had not the conquest of the Dutch territories of New York bound them together, by the means of a people who came from England at a later day, and who brought with them most of the national traits, less influenced by exaggerations and accidents. The result has been an amalgamation that is fast wearing off asperities, and which promises, at no distant period, to produce a homogeneity of character that it is not usual to find in any great and numerous people.

The vessels employed in the earliest communications between the colonies and the mother country, were small, varying from fifty to two hundred tons in burthen. The expedition to Plymouth was first attempted in the *May Flower*, a bark of one hundred and eighty tons and the *Speedwell* of sixty tons; but the latter proving leaky,

after twice returning to port to refit, was abandoned, and the voyage was made in the former vessel alone. That to Virginia under Newport, consumed four months, a delay that was owing to its steering south until the trades were struck, a practice which prevailed among most of the navigators to the new world, for a long time subsequently to the discoveries of Columbus, who had himself been favoured by those constant winds. The *May Flower* sailed from Plymouth, in England, on the 6th of September, and, after a stormy passage, made Cape Cod on the 9th of November. As it had been the intention of those on board to go further south, it is probable that they met with southwest winds and currents, with a northeasterly set, in the American seas.

The first conflict that took place between the colonists and any of their civilised neighbours, occurred in 1613, when an expedition from Virginia, under the orders of Captain Samuel Argal, arriving on the coast of Nova Scotia, made an attack on the new French post of St. Sauveur, which was reduced without difficulty. Argal had eleven vessels with him, most of which, however, were quite small, and his armaments amounted in the whole to fourteen light guns. The French were entirely without artillery. The avowed object of this enterprise was fishing, but the armament has induced a suspicion that the end actually effected was also kept in view. Whatever might have been the intention in fitting out the first force under Captain Argal, it is quite certain, that, on his return to Virginia, he was formally sent against the French in Acadie, with three vessels, better prepared, and that he laid waste the whole of their possessions. Both of these occurrences took place in a time of profound peace, and grew out of a pretension on the part of the English, to the possession of the whole coast, as far north as the 46th degree of latitude.

On his return to Virginia, Captain Argal entered the bay of New York, and demanded possession of that territory also, under the plea that it had been discovered by an Englishman. Hendrick Christaens, whom Argal styled "a pretended Dutch Governor," had no force to resist such a claim, and was compelled to submit. On the return to Virginia, one of the three vessels employed in this expedition was lost, and another having been driven as far east as the Azores, proceeded to England, while Captain Argal alone got into the Chesapeake. The prisoners taken on this occasion narrowly escaped being executed as pirates!

This was the first warlike maritime expedition attempted by the American colonists, if a few parties sent in boats against the savages be excepted. The Dutch were not dispossessed by the useless attempt on their settlement, which appears to have been viewed more as a protest than a conquest, for they continued to increase and to govern themselves for near half a century longer. The first decked vessel built within the old United States, of which we have any account, was constructed by Schipper Adrian Block, on the banks of the Hudson, and probably within the present limits of New York, during the summer of 1614. This vessel *De Laet* terms a "yacht," and

describes as having been of the dimensions of thirty-eight feet keel, forty-four and a half feet on deck, and eleven feet beam. In this "yacht" Block passed through Hell Gate, into the Sound, and steering eastward, he discovered a small island, which he named after himself; going as far as Cape Cod, by the way of the Vineyard passage.

According to the same authority, the Dutch at New Amsterdam, who had constructed a fort, and reinforced their colony, soon after built many more small vessels, sloops and periaguas, opening a trade with the savages, by means of the numerous bays, sounds, and rivers of their territory.

It was also in 1614, that the celebrated Capt. John Smith arrived from England, and sailed on a coasting voyage, with the double purpose of trade and discovery. He went himself in a boat, having a crew of only eight men, and the profits, as well as the discoveries, abundantly rewarded the risks.

It may serve to give the reader a more accurate idea of the condition of trade in this part of the world, if we state that in 1615 the English alone had one hundred and seventy vessels engaged in the Newfoundland fisheries, while the French, Portuguese, and Spaniards had altogether about three hundred.

Many attempts were made about this time to discover a northwest passage to China; the well known expedition in which Baffin was employed occurring in 1616.

After the settlement at Plymouth, the English colonies began to increase regularly in population and resources, while the Dutch at New York became firmly established. The Swedes also commenced a settlement in the Delaware, and the entire coast, from Acadie to North Carolina, was more or less occupied from point to point. There was a good deal of trade with the Indians, with whom wampum was exchanged against peltries. As early as in 1629 the New England Company employed five ships of respectable size, in the trade with the colony. Most of these vessels were armed, and all took colonists in their outward passages. The May Flower appears to have been retained in this business for many years after her first voyage. A small ship was built at or near Boston, in 1633, which was one of the first vessels, if not the first vessel of any size constructed in New England. But the progress of the colony of Massachusetts Bay, in navigation, was so rapid, that in 1639, laws were passed to encourage the fisheries, which may be considered as the elementary school of American nautical enterprise. The fishermen during the season, and the shipwrights at all times, were exempted from military duty, a great privilege in an infant community that was surrounded by savages. Among those who gave an impulse to trade and navigation in this colony, was the celebrated Hugh Peters, subsequently executed for treason in England, who actually caused a vessel of three hundred tons burthen to be constructed at Salem, in 1641.

Within twenty years after the settlement of Plymouth, ship-building and navigation began to occupy much of the attention of New

England, and as every vessel of any size carried many light guns, the navigation of the period had most of the characteristics of an armed trade. In addition to the ships and barks that crossed the ocean, many decked boats, or small sloops, were used on the coast, especially by those who dealt with the Indians for skins. The first engagement that probably ever occurred between inhabitants of the American colonies, and enemies afloat, was a conflict between John Gallop, who was engaged in a trade of this nature, in a sloop of twenty tons, and some Narragansett Indians, who had seized upon a small vessel belonging to a person of the name of Oldham, known to have been similarly occupied. As this, in a certain sense, may be deemed the earliest sea-fight of the nation, we consider it worthy to be related.

Some time in May, 1636, Gallop, in his little sloop, manned by two men and two boys, himself included, was standing along the Sound, near Plum Island, when he was compelled by stress of weather to bear up, for a refuge, among the islands that form a chain between Long Island and Connecticut. On nearing the land, he discovered a vessel very similar to his own, in size and equipments, which was immediately recognised as the pinnace of Mr. Oldham, who had sailed with a crew of two white boys and two Narragansett Indians. Gallop hailed on approaching the other craft, but got no answer, and, running still nearer, no less than fourteen Indians were discovered lying on her deck. A canoe, conveying goods, and manned by Indians, had also just started for the shore. Gallop now began to suspect that Oldham had been overpowered by the savages; a suspicion that was confirmed by the Indians slipping their cable, and standing off before the wind, or in the direction of Narragansett Bay. Satisfied that a robbery had been committed, Gallop made sail in chase, and running alongside of the pinnace, in a spirited manner, he fired a volley of duck-shot at the savages. The latter had swords, spears, and some fire-arms, and they attempted a resistance, but Gallop soon drove them below to a man. Afraid to board in the face of such odds, Gallop now had recourse to a novel expedient to dislodge his enemies. As the pinnace was drifting with no one to manage her, she soon fell to leeward, while the sloop hauled by the wind. As soon as the two vessels were far enough asunder, Gallop put his helm up and ran directly down on the weather quarter of the pinnace, striking her with so much violence as to come near forcing her over on her side. The shock so much alarmed the Indians, who were on an element and in a craft they did not understand, that six of them rushed frantically on deck, and leaped into the sea, where they were all drowned. The sloop again hauled off, when Gallop lashed an anchor to her bows in such a manner, that by running down on the pinnace a second time, he forced the flukes through the sides of the latter, which are represented as having been made of boards. The two vessels were now fast to each other, and the crew of the sloop began to fire through the sides of the pinnace, into her hold. Finding it impossible, however, to drive his enemies up, Gallop loosened his fasts, and hauled up to

windward a third time, when four or five more of the Indians jumped overboard and shared the fate of those who had preceded them. One Indian now appeared on deck and offered to submit. Gallop ran alongside, and received this man in the sloop, when he was bound hands and feet, and put into the hold. Another soon followed this example, and he was also received on board the sloop and bound, but, fearful if two of his wily foes were permitted to commune together, that they would liberate themselves, the second prisoner was thrown into the sea. Only two Indians now remained in the pinnace. They had got into a small apartment below, and being armed, they showed a disposition to defend themselves, when Gallop removed all the goods that remained, into his own sloop, stripped the pinnace of her sails, took her in tow, and hauled up for the islands again. But the wind increasing, the pinnace was cut adrift, and she disappeared in the direction of Narragansett Bay, where it is probable she was stranded in the course of a few hours.

On board the pinnace, Gallop found the body of Mr. Oldham. The head had been cleft, the hands and legs were much mangled, and the flesh was still warm. The corpse was thrown into the sea.

Thus terminated this extraordinary conflict, in which Gallop appears to have shown as much conduct as courage, and which in itself illustrates the vast superiority that professional skill gives on an element like the sea. As it was of the last importance to create a respect for the English name, with a view to protect small parties while trading with the savages, the report of the conqueror on this occasion induced the government of Massachusetts to send an expedition against the offenders, under Mr. Endecott, one of the assistants, which did the Indians much injury in the destruction of their dwellings and crops, though the savages themselves took to flight. This expedition, however, was followed up by others that met with greater success.

The French in Acadie, also, gave rise to two or three unimportant armaments, which led to no results worthy of being recorded.

Notwithstanding the frequency of the Indian conflicts, and the repeated visits to the settlements of the French, the first regular cruisers employed by the American colonists appear to have owed their existence to misunderstandings with the Dutch of the New Netherlands. The colony of New Haven had so far increased as to cause a vessel of one hundred and fifty tons to be built in Rhode Island, as early as the year 1646, but the ship was lost at sea on her first passage. Shortly after, a small cruiser, carrying ten guns, and forty men, was employed by the united colonies of Hartford and New Haven, to cruise in Long Island Sound, with a view to prevent the encroachments of the Dutch, and to keep open the communication with the settlements they had made on the opposite shore. In 1654, orders were received from Parliament to treat the Dutch as enemies, but both communities were still too young and feeble to engage in a warfare that was not considered of paramount necessity.

Nothing effective appears to have been done under these instructions.

At a later day, or in 1665-6, Connecticut kept another small vessel cruising off Watch Hill, in order to prevent the Narragansett Indians from crossing to attack the Montauk tribe, which had been taken under the protection of the colony.

In 1645, a ship of some size was built at Cambridge, Massachusetts, and receiving an armament of fourteen guns, and a crew of thirty men, she sailed for the Canary Isles. This vessel fell in with a rover, supposed to belong to Barbary, of twenty guns, and seventy men, when an action took place that continued the entire day. The rover receiving some serious injury to her rudder, the New England ship was enabled to escape. Although the conflict between Gallop and the Narragansetts is, in one sense, entitled to the precedency, this action may be set down as the first regular naval combat in which any American vessel is known to have been engaged.

An important change occurred, in 1664, in the situation of the American colonies, by the capture of New Netherlands from the Dutch. The vessels employed on this service were under the orders of Sir Robert Carr, while Colonel Richard Nicoll commanded the troops. No resistance was made. In consequence of this accession of territory, and the submission of the Swedish settlements on the Delaware, the English Colonies now had entire possession of the coast, between the Bay of Fundy and the Floridas. It had been computed, in 1660, that the English settlements contained about eighty thousand souls, and this increase of numbers made a total of more than one hundred thousand inhabitants of European extraction. New England paid the most attention to navigation, however; and it appears by Hutchinson, that in 1676, or just a century before the declaration of Independence, the following vessels had been constructed in Boston, or its vicinity, and then belonged to the ports of that neighbourhood, viz:

30 vessels between 100 and 250 tons.

200 vessels between 50 and 100 tons.

200 vessels between 30 and 50 tons.

300 vessels between 6 and 10 tons.

Most of the small vessels were employed in the fisheries, and the ordinary communications between the settlements on the coast were kept up by water. The principal building stations were Boston, Charlestown, Salem, Ipswich, Salisbury, and Portsmouth, and there were even at that early day, thirty master shipwrights.

While the English were thus occupying the coast, the French were gradually extending themselves along the chain of Great Lakes in the interior, drawing a belt around the territories of their rivals. In the course of events of this nature, de la Salle launched a vessel of ten tons on Lake Ontario, in 1678, which was the first decked boat that ever sailed on those waters. The following year, he caused a vessel of sixty tons to be launched on Lake Erie.*

* The second vessel is differently stated to have been of ten and of sixty tons. We have chosen what has appeared to be the best authority.

In 1680, according to Trumbull, Connecticut possessed twenty-four vessels, with a total of 1050 tons, trading between that colony and Boston, Newfoundland, the West Indies, &c. &c. The succeeding year, forty-nine vessels entered the harbour of Portsmouth alone. The well known navigation act, a law to confine the carrying trade to English ships, had been passed as early as 1651, but it had been little regarded by the colonists; and this year Edmund Randolph came a second time to Boston, where he made a vigorous but unsuccessful effort to enforce the obnoxious statute. In Massachusetts, in particular, this law had been almost a dead letter from the first, though the Dutch in New Netherlands had thought it necessary to insert a clause in their articles of capitulation, to permit them to trade with Holland for six months after the surrender.

The buccaneers began to commit depredations in the American seas, about the year 1666; and piracies on a smaller scale, were not infrequent at a much earlier day. These buccaneers were originally, mere outlaws in the West India Islands. Compelled at length to unite, they assembled at the Tortugas, and began to plunder such vessels as approached the shore; most of their robberies being committed by means of open boats. The Spanish vessels, in particular, became the objects of their assaults; and encouraged by success, they began to venture farther from the land. Their numbers rapidly increased, and ere long they ventured to make descents on the coasts, more especially on those of the Spanish settlement, in quest of plunder. It is a mark of the peculiar character of the age, that these freebooters often commenced their enterprises with prayer! They spent their ill-gotten wealth as profligately as it had been obtained, and like more powerful bodies of men, were finally destroyed by the excesses engendered by their own prosperity.

We do not know that there is authority for believing these freebooters ever had any material connexion with the English continental possessions, though Jamaica, at one period, was thronged by them. There are, however, too many traditions on the coast, not to suspect that some of the excesses, to which the loose condition of the western world gave rise, were less ostentatiously committed by those who frequented the country. The same odium was not then attached to piratical acts, as in our own times; and that which even we ourselves have seen done on the land, by men styled heroes, was then committed on the water, almost without comment.

The first authentic account we possess of a regular attempt to suppress piracy on the American coast, is found in Winthrop's Journal, and it occurred as early as in the year 1632. A bark of thirty tons burthen had been launched the previous year, at Mistick, which was called the Blessing of the Bay, and which was converted into a cruiser for the occasion to which we allude. Information had reached the government of the colony that one David Bull, who had fifteen more Englishmen with him, had committed divers acts of piracy among the fishermen at the eastward, and that he also had plundered a settlement on shore. This expedition, however, was suspended in consequence of intelligence having been received that

the people of the coast had manned several pinnaces and shallops and gone in quest of the marauders themselves. Several months elapsed before any thing conclusive could be ascertained concerning Bull and his party, and in January, 1633, another fruitless expedition, that had been sent after them, returned, as did a third in May. One of the proofs of a lawless disposition adduced against Bull, is to be found in a report of his conduct, wherein it is stated that, at the hour when the people of other ships were accustomed to assemble for prayer, his followers would meet on deck, to sing songs and utter senseless phrases. It is probable that this party was composed of fur-traders from Virginia, and that their conduct appeared to the puritans of the east so light, in general, that some trifling excesses were misconstrued into piracy.

Another insignificant affair that occurred at the New Netherlands was turned into piracy; a Captain Stone having been seized, and bound over to appear at the Admiralty Court in England; but the proceedings were dropped in consequence of the belief that the whole transaction would turn out to be little more than a mere assault. This occurred also in 1633; and there is some reason to believe that the exaggerations of the puritans had misled them, from the fact that this Captain Stone was arrested for adultery before he left the colony, and that the grand jury returned the bill *ignoramus*.

It appears by the Journal of Governor Winthrop, that in 1642, one Edward Bedall, of Boston, used the Diving Bell to weigh a vessel called the *Mary Rose*, which had sunk the previous year. Bedall made use of two tubs, "upon which were hanged so many weights (600 lbs.) as would sink them to the ground." The experiment succeeded perfectly, and the guns, ballast, goods, hull, &c., were all transported into shoal water, and recovered. The first instance of a diving bell's being used, was at Cadiz, we believe, in the presence of Charles V.; the notion, so prevalent in this country, that it was an invention of Sir William Phipps, being an error.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century, the shipping of the American colonies had so far increased, as to supply the mother country with many transports, and to conduct no small part of the trade between the two great divisions of the empire. The Whale Fishery at Nantucket, appears to have been established in 1690; and in 1696, it is said that the shipping of New York amounted to forty square-rigged vessels, sixty-two sloops, and sixty boats.

In consequence of the great number of privateers that sailed out of Acadie, the general court of Massachusetts sent an expedition against Port Royal, in 1690. The forces were commanded by Sir William Phipps, and amounted to between 700 and 800 men, who were embarked in eight small vessels. This expedition sailed on the 28th of April, and returned on the 30th of May, having been successful. The good fortune that attended this enterprise, induced the government of Massachusetts to attempt another against a

place as important as Quebec. Sir William Phipps* again commanded, having between thirty and forty vessels, the largest of which was of 44 guns, and 200 men, and the whole number of the troops and seamen employed was about 2000. These forces reached Quebec, October the 5th, 1690, and landed, October the 8th. The force disembarked was about 12 or 1300 men, but it was repulsed without much fighting. On their return to Boston, the ships were dispersed by a gale, and little credit was gained by the undertaking.

The Falkland, a fourth rate, was launched in the Piscataqua, in 1690, and was the first ship of the line ever built in America.

Much alarm existed along the coast, about this time, from an apprehension of the French, who were understood to be cruising in the American seas. We learn, indeed, from the whole history of that period, how nearly balanced were the naval powers of Europe; England, France, Spain, and Holland, standing in mutual awe of each other, on the high seas.

* Sir William Phipps was born at Pemaquid, in 1650. Until eighteen years of age, he was principally employed in agricultural pursuits, and subsequently he was apprenticed to a shipwright. When of age, he built a ship at Sheepscoote; he afterwards followed the sea, and hearing of a Spanish wreck near the Bahamas, he gave such accounts of it in England, that he was sent out with a frigate, to obtain its treasure. In this affair he was unsuccessful. The Duke of Albemarle, however, sent him out a second time, (1687,) when he brought home near £300,000, of which his own share amounted to £16,000. This transaction brought him into notice, and he was knighted by James II. He had been made High Sheriff of New England previously, and he was made Governor of his native colony in 1691; but having had a quarrel, in 1693, with a Captain Short, of the Nonsuch frigate, about the extent of his Vice-Admiralty jurisdiction, he had that officer arrested and sent to England. On the representation of Captain Short, the Governor was summoned to England in person to answer for his conduct in this affair, and having justified himself, he was about to return to his government, when he was seized with a malignant fever, and died in London. Some accounts place his death in 1694, and others in 1695; we believe the latter to be the most correct. He is said to have been honest, well-meaning and religious, though passionate and imperious. He was uneducated of course, not knowing how to read and write, until he had become a man; but acquaintance with the world, considerable native abilities, and a restless enterprise had early brought him into conspicuous stations, where he usually acquitted himself with credit. The popular American opinion, that the Mulgrave family, of which the present head is the Marquess of Normandy, is descended from Sir William Phipps, is a mistake.

CHAPTER II.

Captain Kidd.....Population of Colonies.....Attack on Charleston by the Spaniards.....they are repulsed with great loss.....Port Royal reduced.....its name changed to Anapolis..... New Providence captured.....Pirates expelled.....First negro slaves brought into the country.....First American vessel engaged in the slave trade....The Whale fisheries.... Shipping of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania....Small armed vessels employed.... Wars between England and Spain and France....effects on the American colonies.... Expedition against Louisbourg....Vessels captured....Acadie (now Nova Scotia) ceded to England.

THE close of the seventeenth century found the American coast, in a great measure, occupied from the Bay of Fundy to the Savannah river. The war, which terminated with the peace of Ryswick, had greatly alarmed the colonists, and many small cruisers and galleys had been built and armed, at different ports, principally with a view to cruise against the privateers that sailed out of Acadie and the West Indies; but no action appears to have occurred at sea. The two expeditions of Sir William Phipps were the most important military operations that had then taken place in the colonies, if the Indian wars be excepted; and they led to nothing worthy of commemoration, in a naval point of view. The royal cruisers that occasionally appeared in the American seas, at that remote period, were usually light frigates, of a class between the present sloops and two-and-thirties, and in point of armament, and even of size, were probably unequal to contending with the largest of the former. We have seen that one of Sir William Phipps's ships, in the expedition against Quebec, carried 44 guns and 200 men, a disproportion between the crew and the armament, that proves the latter to have been exceedingly light. In that age, the importance of metal was not appreciated; and the decks of vessels were crowded with guns, which did so little execution, that great naval battles frequently continued days without producing decisive results.

The close of the seventeenth century was also the period when the piracies had got to be the most serious, and when Kidd was guilty of those acts that have since given him a notoriety that would seem to be altogether disproportioned to his deeds. During the wars of that day, the seas had been much infested with a species of privateers, that often committed aggressions, and even piracies on neutral vessels. Most of these rovers were English; and it is said that they sometimes plundered their own countrymen. New-York was not entirely exempt from the suspicion of having equipped several vessels of this description, and very unpleasant surmises affected the characters of some distinguished men of the colony, the governor, Fletcher, among others. In appreciating such charges, it is necessary to remember the character of the age, there being no disgrace attached to adventures in private armed ships, and the transition from fighting for plunder, and plundering unlawfully, is very trifling, in

remote seas, where testimony is not easily obtained, and the law is impotent. That which men can practise with impunity, they are apt to undertake, when tempted by cupidity; and that which is frequent, ceases to shock the sense of right. It is by no means probable that either Governor Fletcher, or any distinguished colonist, deliberately engaged in piratical adventures, but it is quite possible that such men may have been concerned in the equipment of private cruisers, that subsequently committed acts which the laws condemned. It is possible, that when such vessels have returned, a rigid inquiry into the origin of the plunder they brought with them, was not always made. Such, in some measure, was the case with Kidd, whose subsequent notoriety appears to have been as much owing to the *eclat* with which he sailed, sanctioned by government, and supported by men of character, and to some striking incidents that accompanied his return, as to any extraordinary excesses as a pirate. The facts of his case appear to have been as follows:

Much odium having been cast on the colony of New York, in consequence of the number of piracies that had been committed by rovers sailing from the port of that name, the government in England deemed it necessary to take serious measures to repress the evil.— This duty was in particular confided to the Earl of Bellamont, who had been appointed the governor of several of the colonies. Mr. Robert Livingston happening to be in England at the time when the subject was under discussion, and being a man of influence in the colony of New York, he was conferred with, as to the most advisable means of putting an end to the practice. Mr. Livingston advised that a cruiser of force should be sent out expressly to seize all lawless rovers, and he introduced to Lord Bellamont, Captain Wm. Kidd, whom he recommended as a seaman qualified to be put at the head of such an adventure. Captain Kidd was said to have a knowledge of the pirates, and of their places of resort; and at the same time, to be a man on whose integrity and services full reliance might be placed. The first proposition was to employ a king's ship of 30 guns and 150 men on this service; but the war requiring all the regular cruisers, it is a proof of the spirit of the times, that the matter was referred to private enterprise, although the sanction of government was not only promised, but obtained. Mr. Livingston took one-fifth of the shares, and became the usual security for the lawfulness of Kidd's proceedings. The Lord Chancellor, and several other distinguished noblemen, took shares in the adventure also, and the crown reserved to itself a tenth of the proceeds, as a proof that it approved of the enterprise. Kidd received his commission and his orders from the Earl of Bellamont, whom he followed to America for that purpose, sailing from Plymouth in England, April 1696, for New York. There is much reason for thinking that Captain Kidd was not guilty of any illegal act himself, until he found that his more legitimate enterprise was not likely to be successful. In the end, however, he went to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, where he certainly committed piracies, though to what extent is now questionable. He was accused of ravaging the sea between Madagascar and the coast,

from Babelmandel to Malabar, and of committing the usual excesses, though it is probable that there was much exaggeration mixed up with the histories and rumors of the day. Some accounts confine his piracies to a single ship, though it is more than probable that he had a disposition to the vocation, and that he was easily diverted from the object with which he had sailed, even if he did not contemplate piracy on quitting port. After an absence of about three years, Kidd returned to the American coast, first appearing off the east end of Long Island. About thirty miles to the westward of Montauk, protected from the ocean by the southern branch of the island just mentioned, is a capacious bay that obtains its name from another small island, which is so placed as to defend it against the northeast gales. The latter island contains about three thousand acres of land, and ever since the country has been settled, or for two centuries, it has been the property of an honourable family of the name of Gardiner, which has given its name to both the island and the bay. The latter has an anchorage that has long been known to seamen, and into Gardiner's Bay Kidd sailed on this occasion. Anchoring near the island, he landed, and buried some treasures; entrusting Mr. Gardiner with his secret, and making the life of the latter the pledge of his fidelity. This effected, the pirate again sailed, and made similar deposits on other parts of the coast.

After a short interval, Kidd paid and discharged his crew, and it is said burned his ship. He appeared in Boston in 1699, and was immediately seized by the order of Governor Bellamont. Among his papers was found a record, containing lists of his several deposits, which it is probable he held in reserve for his own share of the booty, when he should have made his peace with those in power with the remainder. The authorities, however, were inflexible, and commissioners were immediately sent in quest of the buried booty. When these persons presented themselves to Mr. Gardiner, and assured him that Kidd was in confinement, that gentleman led them to the spot where the box was concealed, and it was recovered. The papers of the Gardiner family show that the contents of the box were bags of gold dust, bags of gold bars, the latter to a considerable amount, coined gold and silver, silver bars, precious stones, silver lamps, &c., &c., in all to the amount of near twenty thousand dollars. Most, if not all, of the other deposits were also obtained. Kidd was sent to England, tried and condemned. He was not executed, however, until May the 9th, 1701. Notwithstanding the acts just related, it would seem that his conviction was, in reality, for murdering one of his own crew.

It followed, almost as a matter of course, that suspicion rested on those who were concerned in sending Captain Kidd to sea. The usual profligacy of party was exhibited in an attempt to impeach several noblemen concerned in the affair; and one or two men of note in the colony of New York were also involved in legal proceedings, in consequence of these piracies; but nothing was ever established against any of the accused, though Governor Fletcher fell into disgrace at home. The known fact that Kidd buried treasure, gave

rise to rumours that he had buried much that was never discovered. With the blindness usual in matters of this sort, it was believed that he had secreted his gold in spots that he never visited, and to this day it is not unfrequent for diggings to be made on the coast, under the influence of dreams that have been occasioned by meditating on the subject, and in the hope of finding some of the long lost riches.

The year that Kidd was sent to England, seven pirates were executed in Charleston, South Carolina, that coast having been much infested with these robbers.

In 1701, the population of the American colonies was estimated at 262,000, while the Newfoundland fisheries were said to employ 121 vessels, 2,700 men, and nearly 8,000 tons.

Another war soon occurring, the troubles on the coast were revived, and as the colonies grew in importance, the mother country not only extended her care towards them in a greater degree, but the people of the provinces themselves, felt a disposition to participate more largely in the struggles. Still, so little heed was taken against the ordinary dangers, that the port of New York, in 1705, was totally without defence; or so nearly so, that a solitary French privateer entered it, and caused the greatest consternation.

The Spaniards, with whom England was at war, conceiving that South Carolina properly belonged to the Floridas, undertook an expedition against Charleston, in 1706, with four ships of war and a galley, commanded by a French admiral. A commission of vice-admiral was immediately given to Lieut. Col. Rhett, a gentleman who possessed the public confidence. Mr. Rhett hoisted his flag in the Crown, galley, and several ships that happened to be in port, were hastily manned and armed. In the mean time the enemy had arrived and surrounded the place, but meeting with some repulses on shore, Mr. Rhett got under way to engage the hostile squadron, when the latter retired with precipitation. The Spaniards are said to have lost near half their men in this unsuccessful undertaking.

Hearing of a large enemy's ship on the coast, a few days after the fleet had disappeared, Mr. Rhett went in quest of her with two small vessels, and succeeded in capturing her, and in bringing in ninety prisoners.

From an early day the possession of Port Royal in Acadie, appears to have been a favorite object with the colonists, most probably from the great interest they felt in the fisheries. We have already seen that expeditions were sent against this place, in the earlier wars, while we now find no less than three undertaken, with the same object, in the war of 1702-12. The first of these expeditions was set on foot in 1707, being almost purely of colonial origin. It sailed in May, in twenty-three transports and whale-boats, under the convoy of the Deptford man-of-war, Captain Stuckley, accompanied by the Province, galley, Captain Southack. This expedition effected nothing. The second attempt was not made until the year 1709, when an enterprise on a larger scale was planned. According to Trumbull, the colonies east of Connecticut were ordered to raise 1,200 men for this undertaking, and to provide transports, pi-

lots, and provisions for three months, while Connecticut itself and the more southern provinces, were to send a force of 1,500 men, by land, against Montreal. The maritime part of the expedition was abandoned, after waiting three months in the port of Boston for the British ships that were to convoy it, and to aid in subduing the place. The attack on Montreal was also given up, for the want of the expected co-operation. The third attempt was made in 1710, when a Colonel Nicholson, of the English service, was entrusted with the command. On this occasion the preparations were made conjointly by the crown and the provinces, the latter furnishing the transports and several cruisers. The fleet consisted in all, of 36 sail: viz. three fourth-rates, two fifth-rates, five frigates, a bomb ketch, the Province, galley, and twenty-four transports. In these vessels were embarked a regiment of marines, and five regiments of provincials. The expedition sailed from Boston on the 18th of September, arrived off Port Royal on the 24th, and on the 1st of October the place submitted. Its name was changed to Annapolis, by which appellation it is yet known. Stimulated by this success, a still more important attempt was got up in 1711, against the French possessions on the banks of the St. Lawrence. England now appeared disposed to put forth her power in earnest, and a fleet of fifteen sail, twelve of which were sent directly from England, and three of which had been stationed on the coast, were put under the orders of Vice-admiral Sir Hovenden Walker, for that purpose. In this fleet were several ships of the line, and it was accompanied by forty transports and six store vessels. Five of the veteran regiments that had served under Marlborough, were sent out with the fleet, and two regiments raised in New England being added to them, the land forces amounted to between 6,000 and 7,000 men.

After considerable delay, the fleet sailed on the 30th of July, 1711, when the Governor of Massachusetts ordered a fast to be observed every Thursday, until the result should be known. On the 14th of August the ships entered the St. Lawrence, and on the 18th the admiral, in order to collect his transports, put into the bay of Gaspé. Here he remained until the 20th, when the fleet proceeded. On the 20th the ships were off soundings, out of sight of land, and enveloped in a fog, with a gale at E. S. E. The fleet now brought-to with the ships' heads to the southward. Notwithstanding this precaution, it was soon discovered that the whole of them were in imminent jeopardy among the rocks, islands, and currents of the north-shore, which was, moreover, a lee shore. Some of the vessels saved themselves by anchoring, among which was the *Edgar*, 70, the admiral's own ship: but eight transports were lost, together with a thousand people, and the expedition was abandoned. The admiral now dismissed the provincial troops and vessels, and sailed for England with the remainder of the fleet. These signal disasters led to loud complaints and to bitter recriminations between the English and American officers. To the latter was attributed a fatal loss of time, in raising their levies and making other preparations, which brought the expedition too late in the season, and they were also accused of furnishing in-

competent pilots. It is probable that the first accusation was not without foundation, since it has been a known national failing to defer all military preparations to the latest possible moment, from the day the country has been peopled ; though the last was no doubt unmerited, as there could be no motive for furnishing any other pilots than the best that the colonies possessed. On the part of the Americans, the admiral, and the English commanders in general, were said to be opinionated and indisposed to take advice ; a charge quite as likely to be true, as it also accords with national character, and more especially with the superciliousness with which the English were known to regard the provincials. The admiral threw the responsibility of having hove-to the fleet on the pilots, who, in their turn, declared that it was done contrary to their advice. Some French pilots are said, by Charlevoix, to have warned the admiral of his danger also, but he equally disregarded their information. It is in favour of the provincials, that, one small victualler excepted, none of their own vessels were lost, and that the crew of this victualler was saved. Many of the pilots were sent to England to be examined before the Privy Council, but no investigation into the affair took place. The loss of the admiral's papers is thought to have put an end to the contemplated inquiry, the *Edgar* having been blown up, by accident, at Plymouth, shortly after her return, by which event 400 men lost their lives ; thus terminating a most disastrous expedition by a dire calamity. It ought to be mentioned, that the colonies met the charge of delay, by showing that the orders to raise troops, and to make the other requisite preparations, were received only sixteen days before Sir *Hovenden Walker* arrived in port with his fleet.

As late as the year 1713, *Trumbull* enumerates the shipping of Connecticut at only 2 brigs, 20 sloops, and a number of smaller craft. The seamen he estimates at 120 ! On the other hand, the commerce of Massachusetts, as appears by the custom-house returns, taken between the years 1714 and 1717, employed 25,406 tons of shipping, 492 vessels, and 3493 sea-faring persons. The first schooner, a description of vessel now so much in use in America as almost to be deemed national, is said to have been built at Cape Ann, by Captain *Henry Robinson*, in 1714. Her name has been unfortunately lost.

The pirates rather increased than diminished after the peace of 1713, frequenting the American coast much more than had been their practice in the preceding century. They had reached to New Providence, whence they proceeded both north and south, in their predatory excursions. *Samuel Bellamy*, in the ship *Whidah*, of 23 guns and 130 men, was one of the most formidable of these free-booters, and he even had the audacity to come off the coast of New England, in 1717, where he made several prizes. At length he was wrecked, with his captured vessels, on Cape Cod, and most of the gang were lost. More than a hundred bodies washed ashore, and six of those who escaped were seized, tried at Boston and executed. The following year, the celebrated Captain *Woods Rogers*, so well

known for his exploits on the Spanish Main, was sent against New Providence, with a small squadron of King's ships, carrying a proclamation of pardon to all those who would abandon their lawless practices, and return to honest industry. The island was captured without resistance, and possession taken for the English crown. Most of the freebooters accepted of the amnesty, though a party of ninety, under the command of one Vane, seized a sloop, and made their escape. One gang, about thirty in number, repaired to the coast of the Carolinas, where they established themselves near the mouth of Cape Fear River, and continued their depredations. Mr. William Rhett, whose gallantry and enterprise have already been mentioned, was sent out against them by Governor Johnson of North Carolina, in a vessel of some force. This officer captured a sloop commanded by Steed Bonnet, and manned by thirty of the freebooters. Shortly after, the Governor himself went in person against the remainder, and falling in with another sloop, a desperate engagement took place, in which, it would seem, it was the intention not to give quarter, as nearly all in the sloop were slain. Those who escaped death in the action, were immediately tried, and, with the exception of one man, hanged. These severe blows did much towards clearing the coast of freebooters, though we find that a gang of twenty-five more were taken into Rhode Island, in 1723, by a British sloop of war, and sentenced to be hanged. How many were executed, is not known.

The peculiar condition of America, where land of the greatest fertility abounded, while manual labour was difficult to be obtained, early introduced into the colonies the traffic in slaves, though it speaks favourably for the people of the country, that they generally received this species of succour with reluctance; and a long period elapsed before the trade became important. It would exceed our proper office were we to enter into a continuous history of this branch of American commerce, and we shall confine our remarks, therefore, to the few facts that were connected with its navigation.

The first negro slaves brought into the country, were landed from a Dutch man-of-war, at James Town, in 1620.* Where these poor Africans were obtained is not now known, but they were most probably the victims of perfidy. The increase among the blacks was very slow, however; for thirty years later the whites of Virginia were said to outnumber the negroes, in the proportion of fifty to one; and even when the colony had been settled seventy years, the slaves were not at all numerous.†

The first American vessel engaged in the slave trade, of which we have any account, sailed from Boston, for the coast of Guinea, in 1645, having been fitted out by Thomas Keyser and James Smith.‡ The last of these worthies was a member of the church. To the credit of the people of Boston, their sense of right revolted at the act, the parties concerned were arraigned, and the slaves were ordered to be restored to their native country at the public expense.

* Beverly.

† Bancroft.

‡ Bancroft.

Redemptioners were also early introduced into the country as servants, as well as the prisoners taken in the battles of the civil wars. Thus the *John and Sarah*, which arrived at Boston in 1652, brought with her freight for the Scotch prisoners taken at Dunbar.* Many of the Royalists taken at the battle of Worcester were also transported and sold into servitude. The leaders of the insurrection of Penruddock shared the same fate. Many of the prisoners taken in Monmouth's rebellion were sentenced to transportation in turn. Indeed, at this period, England appeared to think America the best receptacle of her discontented, whether in religion or politics.

As recently as 1724, the importation of slaves into the Carolinas amounted to but 439 souls. The trade was entirely in British ships. At a later day, however, Rhode Island, and some of the other colonies, engaged extensively in their traffic.*

We turn with satisfaction to the whale fisheries. The commencement of this manly, lucrative, and hardy pursuit dates from an early period in the history of the country. The whale frequenting the American seas, at that time, the people of the coasts kept boats, organised themselves into gangs, and whenever a spout was seen, they would launch in pursuit. This irregular system prevailed many years, until sloops, and other small craft, began to be employed in the offing. These vessels would range the coast, as far south as the West Indies, and north to Davis's Straits. They occasionally crossed to the Azores, where a rich booty was sometimes obtained in the spermaceti.

The whale fishery on a larger scale, dates from about the middle of the eighteenth century, when Massachusetts in particular, engaged extensively in the enterprise. This colony alone is said to have had no less than three hundred vessels employed in the northern and southern whale fisheries previously to the war of the Revolution. Her vessels led the way to the South Atlantic, to the African coast, and to the Pacific Ocean.

In 1731, Pennsylvania owned 6000 tons of shipping, and Massachusetts near 38,000, of which about one half were in the European trade; while the entrances into New York in 1737 reached to 211 sail, and the clearances to 220. About the same time Philadelphia had 211 of the former, and 215 of the latter. At this period in the history of the country (1739,) Newport had a hundred sail of shipping of different sizes.

After the war which was terminated by the peace of Utrecht, most of the maritime colonies employed a species of guarda-costas, small armed vessels, that were maintained for the suppression of piracies, and for the general protection of the coasts. Some of these vessels were commanded by young officers, who afterwards rose to more or less distinction, either at home, or in the British service. Among others was Lieutenant Wooster, afterwards Captain Wooster, who commanded the armed vessel employed by Massachusetts. This gentleman was subsequently killed at Danbury, during the Revolu-

* Suffolk County Records, as given by Bancroft.

tion, holding the rank of a Brigadier General in the militia of his native state.

England declared war in 1739 against Spain, and the American Colonies became the seat of many of her preparations and levies. Natives of this country were much employed in the different expeditions, and it is well known that the estate which has since acquired so much celebrity on account of its having been the property of Washington, obtained the appellation of Mount Vernon from the circumstance that an elder brother, from whom that great man inherited it, had served in the celebrated attack against Carthage, under the admiral of that name. In 1741, the colonies supplied many of the transports sent against Cuba.

The year 1744 became memorable in the history of the colonies, by another declaration of war against France. By this time the importance of all the American provinces, whether English, French, or Spanish, was certain to render them, more or less, seats of the contests; and the great European states interested, were now found seriously exhibiting their power in the Western hemisphere. The short duration of the war, probably, alone prevented America from being the scene of those severe struggles that were deferred a few years by the peace of Aix la Chapelle. Short as was the contest, however, it afforded the colonists an opportunity of manifesting both their spirit and their resources, by an expedition against Louisbourg.

The French had long been aware of the importance of a port that commanded the entrance of the St. Lawrence, as Gibraltar commands the approach to the Mediterranean, and vast sums of money had been expended on the fortifications of Louisbourg. It is said that no less than \$6,000,000 were appropriated to this object, and a quarter of a century had been consumed in the preparations. The place was so formidable as to have been termed a second Dunkirk. So conscious had Massachusetts become of her strength, however, that no sooner was the declaration of war known, than Governor Shirley laid propositions before the English ministry and the colonial legislature, for the reduction of this great naval and military station. The General Court of Massachusetts, at first, was afraid to embark in so serious an enterprise without assurances of support from home, as England was then affectionately termed, but the people of the colony getting a knowledge of the Governor's wishes, seconded him so strongly with petitions, that the measure was finally carried by a majority of one. Connecticut, Rhode Island and New Hampshire lent their aid, and by the 25th of March, 1745, the expedition was ready to sail. Not a British soldier was employed, and when the fleet left Boston, it was with very uncertain hopes of being supported by any of the king's ships.

The land forces, all levies of New England, no other colony joining in the enterprise, were led by Colonel William Pepperel, of Kittery, in Maine, and the fleet was commanded by Captain Edward Tyng, of the Massachusetts colonial marine. The naval part of these forces consisted principally of vessels equipped, or hired, for this especial service. There appear to have been twelve in all,

besides the transports, the largest carrying but 20 guns. The land forces amounted to 4070 men. From the various and contradictory accounts of this armament, we gather the following list of the colonial cruisers engaged in the expedition, viz: Ships, Massachusetts, 20, Commodore Tyng; Cæsar, 20, Captain Snelling;—Snows, Shirley, 20, Captain Rouse; Prince of Orange, 16, Captain Smethurst;—Brig Boston Packet, 16, Captain Fletcher; and Sloops, — 12, Donahue; — 8, Saunders; — Bosch;—a ship hired by Rhode Island, 20, Captain Griffen, and two vessels of 16 guns each, belonging to Connecticut.

It is a circumstance worthy of being mentioned, as characteristic of the manners of the day, and of the habitual thrift of the New England colonists, that Governor Shirley, in his written instructions, lays great stress on an order for the ships to go well provided with cod-lines, in order to subsist the troops and seamen, as much as possible, on the products of the sea.

The fleet reached Canseau on the 4th of April, where it remained some weeks, to be joined by the levies of New Hampshire and Connecticut, as well as to allow time for the ice to dissolve in the neighbourhood of Cape Breton. For the first time, probably, in the history of the colonies, large military preparations had been made in season, and the result triumphantly showed the benefit of the unwonted alacrity. Here Commodore Warren, of the British navy, joined the expedition, with a part of the West India squadron, in which seas, and on the American coast, he had long commanded. This excellent and efficient officer, than whom there was not a braver in the British marine, brought with him the Superb, 60, and three ships of forty guns; his broad pennant flying in the former. Of course, he assumed the command of the naval operations, though great distrust appears to have existed between him and Colonel Pepperel to the last. After a conference with the latter, he went off Louisbourg, which he blockaded.

Louisbourg was invested by land on the 30th of April, and after a vigorous siege of forty-seven days, during which time a severe cannonade was carried on, the place submitted. The French flags were kept flying for some time after the surrender, by which *rust* two East Indiamen and a South Sea ship, all richly laden, were decoyed into the mouth of the harbour and captured. The value of these three vessels has been estimated as high as \$3,000,000.

While cruising off the port, Commodore Warren captured the French man-of-war Vigilant, 60, with troops and supplies for the garrison. This important event, no doubt, was of great moment to the result of the siege.

Although the naval part of the colonial expedition could have been of no great account after the arrival of Commodore Warren,* it took the sea with creditable vigour, as soon as Louisbourg had submitted. The Shirley, Galley, 20, Captain Rouse, or as the vessel is some-

* It has been pretended that the Vigilant 60, was captured by the colonial ship Massachusetts 20, Commodore Tyng; but this statement, besides being highly improbable in itself, is not properly sustained by the histories of the day.

times called, the *Snow, Shirley*, captured eight French vessels, and, in one instance, she brought in two, taken after an obstinate and gallant resistance. For this exploit, that officer received the commission of a captain in the King's service.

No less than 400 privateers are said to have been out from the colonies in this war, but the number is so incredible as to give rise to the conjectures that the estimate includes letters of marque and boats on the coast. Nothing worthy of much notice occurred in America, during this short war, besides the capture of *Louisbourg*, and this place was restored to the French at the peace.

Previously, however, to this event, the French menaced the whole of the American coast, from *Cape Breton* to the *Delaware*, with two serious invasions, both of which were fortunately defeated; the first by the elements, and the second by the victory obtained by Admirals *Anson* and *Warren*, in 1747. The peace did not take place until the following year, when *Acadie* was finally ceded to the British crown and took the name of *Nova Scotia*.

The general interest felt in the fisheries, and the desire to extend the commerce of the country, caused a company in *Philadelphia* to undertake the discovery of a Northwest passage. With this object the schooner *Argo*, Captain *Swaine*, sailed for *Hudson's Bay*, March 4th, 1753. After an absence of several months the *Argo* returned to *Philadelphia*, having effected little more than obtaining a better knowledge of the coast, and of the inlets of the great bays. The following year the attempt was repeated with still less success, the vessel having lost three of her people in an encounter with the Indians.

CHAPTER III.

Shipping of different ports, in 1750—Practice respecting Midshipmen—Old French War—Sharp conflict between the *Thurloe* and *Les Deux Amis*—Duty on stamps and tea—Burning of the *Gaspé*—Destruction of the tea—Battle of *Lexington*.

THE peace of *Aix la Chapelle* found the navigation of the American colonies in a very flourishing condition. More than a century had elapsed since the settlements had passed the ordeal of their infant struggles, and although distant from each other, and labouring under the disadvantages of a scattered population, they were fast rising to the dignity and power of states. The necessity of maintaining all their more important communications by water, had a direct tendency to encourage a disposition to the sea, and, although without a regular warlike marine, their mercantile tonnage probably equalled that of the mother country, when considered in reference to population. The number of souls in all the provinces, at that period, did not much exceed a million, if the Indians be excluded from the computation. Of the tonnage it is not easy to speak with accuracy, though we possess sufficient authority by which to form some general estimates. The year of the peace, 500 vessels are said to have

cleared from the single port of Boston, and 430 to have entered; this was exclusively of coasters and fishing vessels. At Portsmouth, New Hampshire, there were 121 clearances and 73 entries, besides 200 coasting vessels in regular employment. The trade of New York and Philadelphia was less than that of Boston, but still respectable. Thus in 1749, or the year succeeding that of the peace, the clearances at Philadelphia were 291, and the entries 303; while Boston, during the same period, had 504 clearances and 489 entries. In 1750, a year in which the navigation had sensibly diminished, the clearances of the former port were 286, and the entries 232. Many ports, which have since lost most of their navigation, then enjoyed a respectable trade, among which may be mentioned Newport, Rhode Island, and Perth Amboy, New Jersey.

The settlements extended no where to any great distance from the ocean, the entire population being virtually ranged along the coast, of which the American colonies then possessed rather more in extent than that of the entire coast of the Island of Great Britain. Some of the writers of the day boast that the tonnage and guns employed in privateers out of the colonies, during the late war, had exceeded the tonnage and guns of the royal navy of England, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Although many of the clearances and entries just enumerated, were, unquestionably, those of vessels owned by the mother country, there is no doubt that a very fair proportion belonged to the provinces. The number of coasting and fishing vessels, in particular, was already great, Massachusetts alone owning nearly one vessel, of some description or other, for each hundred inhabitants.

Up to this period, the common white oak of the forest was the wood principally used in naval constructions, though the chestnut was also found serviceable in particular parts of the frames. The white oak of North America varies very much in quality, according to the latitude, and other circumstances; that which grows in the southern district, as well as that which grows near the sea, being generally more esteemed than that which is found further north, or remote from the coast. The trees, moreover, which have been left in the open lands, possess a value that does not belong to those which have acquired all their properties in the shades of the forest. But a new era in ship building was at hand, through the introduction of a wood that greatly abounded in the more southern maritime regions of British America. In 1750, a vessel called the *Live Oak* arrived in Charleston, South Carolina, having been built of the invaluable timber after which she was named, which was now discovered to be one of the best materials for naval architecture known. The *Live Oak* is said to have been the first vessel in which this wood was ever used.

About this time, it also became a practice among the gentry of the American provinces, to cause their sons to be entered as midshipmen in the royal navy. Occasionally an American had been transferred from the colonial marine to that of the king, but, hitherto, very few boys had been regularly entered, or rated, in the service, with a view to adopting it as a profession. The circumstance that Washington was intended for such a life is generally known, and we now

look back to the tender affection of his mother, which alone prevented it, as to a Providential interference in behalf of the nation. Many of those who were thus placed in the English marine rose to high stations, and several have been, or still are, classed among the ablest and most useful officers in the employment of the British crown. We might even point to a painful notoriety that a few obtained, by their activity against the land of their birth, during the war of the Revolution.

The tranquility established by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, like that produced by the peace of Utrecht, was of short continuance. Disputes early commenced between the English and French provinces, in relation to their boundaries; and an inland war actually broke out between them in 1754, though the peace of Europe was not immediately disturbed by this remote and local contest. This singular state of things continued throughout 1755, and the campaign of that year was one of the most important that had then occurred on the American continent. Both nations reinforced their troops from Europe, and strong squadrons were employed to protect the convoys; but there being no technical hostilities, commissions were not issued to letters of marque and privateers. After many ineffectual attempts at an accommodation, however, the King of Great Britain made a formal declaration of war on the 17th of May, 1756.

Such was the commencement of the struggle that in America is familiarly called "the old French war." Although this contest was of the last importance to the colonies, by driving the French from their part of the continent, and by leaving the savages without an ally, its events were more properly connected with the movements of armies, than with any naval operations of magnitude, so far as the latter belongs to the subject of this work. The beginning of the war was disastrous, but in the end, the celebrated Earl of Chatham succeeded in infusing a portion of his own energy into the councils of the King, and from that moment the most brilliant success rewarded his efforts.

An expedition against Louisbourg was attempted in 1757, under Admiral Holbourn, but it was abandoned on ascertaining that, besides its regular garrison and important works, the place was defended by a fleet of 17 sail of the line, which was moored in the harbour. We learn the growing importance of the colonies in the forces employed on this occasion; Louisbourg having a garrison of 6000 regulars, while the army destined to attack it, mustered about 11,000 English troops, besides provincials. The failure appears to have arisen out of the superiority of the French in ships.

It is worthy of being mentioned, that, while the English fleet was cruising off Louisbourg it met with a heavy gale, in which one of its ships, the *Tilbury*, was wrecked, and more than two hundred of her crew were drowned. The remainder fell into the hands of the French, who with the humanity and courtesy of a great and polished nation, sent the sufferers to Halifax, under the protection of a flag of truce.

Although Spain became a party in the war in 1762, on the side of

France, the circumstance did not materially vary the nature of the exertions of the colonies, which were mainly directed to the reduction of the Canadas. Martinique and the Havanna were both captured, but the fleets employed by the English were on a scale too large to require the aid of the light vessels of the provinces. Many Americans served in these enterprises, both by land and by water, but, as is always the case, when there is metropolitan power to claim the glory, the credit due their exertions was absorbed in the renown of the mother country.

Peace was signed on the 10th of February, 1763, and from that day France ceased to claim any portion of the American Continent north of Louisiana, with the exception of two insignificant fishing stations, near the outlet of the St. Lawrence. The conquests of this war were an incipient step towards the eventual independence of the colonies, since the latter found themselves without any enemy in their vicinity, to cause them to lean on England for succour, or to divert their policy from those domestic measures which were more immediately connected with their internal prosperity.

The northern colonies gained much credit by their exertions in the late war, having raised a respectable army; but less mention is made of their privateers than might have been supposed; from which we are led to infer, that the enterprises of this nature did not attract as much attention as those which had characterised the earlier struggles of the country.

At the close of this great contest, the original American colonies, or those which have since constituted the United States, without including the Floridas and Louisiana, are supposed to have contained more than 1,200,000 souls, exclusively of Indians. Censuses were actually taken in one or two of the provinces. That of Massachusetts gave a return a little exceeding 245,000, including 5000 people of colour. That of Maryland, taken in 1755, gave a total of 107,208 whites, a number considerably exceeding the estimates after the peace.

This war, while, on the part of the colonists, it was so much confined to expeditions by land, afforded, notwithstanding, some instances of hardihood and gallantry on the part of the privateers, of which, as usual, more or less were at sea. One of these actions deserves to be noticed, as it was among the most obstinate of which we possess any authentic accounts. It was in January, 1758, that the privateer *Thurloe*, 14, Captain *Mantle*, fell in with the French privateer *Les Deux Amis*, 10, Captain *Felix*. The *Thurloe* had a crew of 84 men, and *Les Deux Amis* a crew of 98. Perceiving the superiority of his antagonist in guns, the Frenchman endeavored to escape, but finding this impossible, he ran him athwart hawse, and made a noble effort to carry him by boarding. He was met by a resolution equal to his own, and for more than two hours these small vessels are said to have remained foul of each other, their crews contending for victory, with all the implements of destruction known to the warfare of the day. The *Thurloe* alone, is said to have thrown no fewer than 300 powder flasks and 72 stinkpots, on board her enemy, besides

making a liberal use of her guns and small arms. The *Deux Amis* struck, probably subdued by the metal of her adversary, but not until she had rendered the combat one of the bloodiest in naval annals, by the obstinacy of her resistance. The *Thurloe* had 12 men killed, and 25 wounded; *Les Deux Amis* had more than 80 of her people included in the casualties.

Although the history of this action is liable to the distrust that accompanies all accounts that are not subjected to the investigation of official forms and official scrutiny, it appears to be given, in the accounts of the day, with a particularity that renders it worthy of credit.

Immediately after the peace of 1763, commenced that legislative usurpation on the part of the mother country, which twenty years later terminated in the independence of the colonies. It would exceed the proper limits of a work of this character, to enter into the details of that eventful period, or minutely to trace the progress of a system of encroachments that gradually undermined the allegiance of a people, whose confiding affection still resists the animosities of two wars, and the jealousies and competition of commerce.

America, at the period of which we write, had that mental dependence on the mother country, which the province is known to feel for the metropolis; exaggerating its virtues, palliating its defects, and substituting its own images for reason and truth. The temporary alienation that succeeded was the work of time, and it required more than ten years of progressive innovations, on the part of the parliament of Great Britain, before the more daring and far-sighted of the American leaders could bring the body of the people up to the point of open resistance. All this time, however, the provinces were rapidly increasing in numbers, in resources, and in a spirit of nationality, as opposed to the ancient sentiment, which identified the children of the colonists with a land that they still loved to term "home." As the causes which led to the great results that followed lay deeper than it was usual for the writers of the day to consider, a passing word on so grave a subject may not be thrown away.

In the age when the American colonies were founded, and received their different charters from the crown, the prerogative of the King of England was active, the monarch effectually ruling the empire, checked by the other branches of the government. The relation between a prince and his subjects is simple, and, when not diverted from its legitimate direction, it is fostering and paternal. Under such circumstances, and especially when there exists no unusual sources of irritation, the several parts of an extended empire may be governed equitably and on a common principle of justice. The monarch of one portion of the territories is the monarch of another, and he is supposed equally to respect the rights and interests of all. But, when the revolution of 1688 put the House of Hanover on the throne, a system of ministerial responsibility was established, that gradually reduced the power of the crown, until the ministers, who, in effect, form the executive of Great Britain, got to be the creatures of parliament, instead of remaining the real servants

of the prince. It is true, that the King named his cabinet, or rather its head ; but he was compelled to name those that parliament selected, or the latter stopped the supplies. This was effectually substituting the power of parliament, in all the more important relations of the empire, for that of the king ; and, as parliament was composed of a representation, direct and indirect, of a small part of the territory nominally subject to the British Crown, it followed as a consequence, that this portion of the empire, by extending its legislation unduly over the others, was substituting a new and dangerous master, for a prince who might be supposed to know no difference in his affection for his subjects.

While, however, this was probably the principle that lay at the root of the difficulties with America, few saw it in theory ; facts invariably preceding opinion in a country as purely practical as this. Legislative usurpation, in the abstract, was resisted ; while few perceived the difference between a legislation that was effectually checked by the veto of an independent monarch, bearing an equal relation to all the parts of a vast empire, and a legislation that not only held this, but all the other material powers of the crown, directly or indirectly, in subjection.

Empires may be held together when the several parts are ruled by a central power that has a common, just, and obvious interest in all ; but nothing short of force can compel the possessors of one detached territory to be subservient to the interests of the possessors of another. This great obstacle, then, lay at the root of the difficulties, and, keeping out of view the questions of the day, which arose as consequences rather than as causes, it is now clear that the connexion could not have been perpetuated, while a small fragment of the empire so absolutely controlled the great and moving power of the state.

Among the offensive measures adopted by parliament was a duty on stamps, and another on tea. By the first, vessels could not regularly proceed to sea, unless furnished with the required stamps ; yet so strong was the opposition, that ships actually ventured on the ocean without the necessary papers ; nor is it known that any serious consequences resulted from so bold a step. In the end, the stamp-officers having resigned, and no one being willing to incur the odium of filling their places, the courts of justice themselves, transacted business without regard to those forms that the acts of parliament had rendered necessary. This tax was finally abandoned, and substitutes were sought, that were believed to be more manageable.

Fresh attempts to enforce the navigation act, which had virtually become a dead letter, were made in 1768, and a sloop from Madeira, loaded with wine, was actually seized in Boston, and placed under the guns of the *Romney* man-of-war. A mob followed, and the public officers were compelled to seek protection in the castle.

Great Britain had never maintained a body of troops in her colonies, except to protect them against the French and Indians. These soldiers had hitherto been principally kept on remote frontiers ; but regiments were now sent to Boston, evidently with a view to enforce

the assumed ascendancy of the British Parliament. This step added greatly to the discontent, and eventually was the direct cause of the commencement of hostilities.

One of the first overt acts of resistance that took place in this celebrated struggle, occurred in 1772, in the waters of Rhode Island. A vessel of war had been stationed on the coast to enforce the laws, and a small schooner, with a light armament and twenty-seven men, called the *Gaspé*, was employed as a tender, to run into the shallow waters of that coast. On the 17th of June, 1772, a Providence packet, that plied between New York and Rhode Island, named the *Hannah*, and commanded by a Captain Linzee, hove in sight of the man-of-war, on her passage up the bay. The *Hannah* was ordered to heave-to, in order to be examined; but her master refused to comply; and being favoured by a fresh southerly breeze, that was fast sweeping him out of gunshot, the *Gaspé* was signalled to follow. The chase continued for five-and-twenty miles, under a press of sail, when the *Hannah* coming up with a bar, with which her master was familiar, and drawing less water than the schooner, Captain Linzee led the latter on a shoal, where she struck. The tide falling, the *Gaspé* sewed, and was not in a condition to be removed for several hours.

The news of the chase was circulated on the arrival of the *Hannah* at Providence. A strong feeling was excited among the population, and towards evening the town drummer appeared in the streets, assembling the people in the ordinary manner. As soon as a crowd was collected, the drummer led his followers in front of a shed that stood near one of the stores, when a man disguised as an Indian suddenly appeared on the roof, and proclaimed a secret expedition for that night, inviting all of "stout hearts" to assemble on the wharf, precisely at nine, disguised like himself. At the appointed hour, most of the men in the place collected at the spot designated, when sixty-four were selected for the undertaking that was in view.

This party embarked in eight of the launches of the different vessels lying at the wharves, and taking with them a quantity of paving stones, they pulled down the river in a body. The commander is supposed to have been a Captain Whipple, who afterwards held a commission in the service of Congress, but none of the names were publicly mentioned at the time. On nearing the *Gaspé*, about two in the morning, the boats were hailed by a sentinel on deck. This man was driven below by a volley of stones. The commander of the *Gaspé* now appeared, and ordering the boats off, he fired a pistol at them. This discharge was returned from a musket, and the officer was shot through the thigh. By this time, the crew of the *Gaspé* had assembled, and the party from Providence boarded. The conflict was short, the schooner's people being knocked down and secured. All on board were put into the boats, and the *Gaspé* was set on fire. Towards morning she blew up.

This bold step naturally excited great indignation in the British officers, and all possible means were taken to discover the offenders. The Government at home offered a reward of £1000 sterling for the

leader, and £500 to any person who would discover the other parties, with the promise of a pardon should the informer be an accomplice. But the feeling of the times was too high for the ordinary means of detection, no evidence having ever been obtained sufficient even to arraign a solitary individual, notwithstanding a Commission of Inquiry, under the Great Seal of England, sat with that object, from January to June, during the year 1773.

Although this affair led to no immediate results, it doubtless had its influence in widening the breach between the opposing parties, and it is worthy of remark, that in it was shed the first blood that flowed in the struggle for American Independence; the whole transaction being as direct a resistance to oppression, as the subsequent, and better known fight at Lexington.

The year 1773 is memorable in American history, for the resistance made by the colonists to the duty on tea. By means of some management on the part of the British ministry, in permitting the East India Company to export their teas free of charges, it was possible to sell the article at a lower rate in America, subject to the duty, than it could be sold previously to the imposition of the tax. Fancying that this circumstance would favour the views of all the parties in Europe, for the warehouses of the company were glutted in consequence of the system of non-importation adopted by the colonists, several cargoes were sent to different ports, including New York, Philadelphia, Charleston and Boston. The inhabitants of the two former places compelled the ships to return to London, without unloading, while the people of Charleston caused their vessel to be discharged, and the tea to be stored in damp cellars, where it finally spoiled.

Three ships loaded with the offensive article had been sent to Boston, and the inhabitants succeeded in persuading their masters to consent to return to London, without discharging, but the consignees refused to release them from their charter-parties, while the authorities denied the necessary clearances. The Governor even withheld the permit necessary to pass the fort. This conduct produced great excitement, and preparations were made to destroy the tea, under an apprehension that it might be gradually and clandestinely landed. Suddenly, in the dusk of the evening, a party disguised as Indians, and which has been differently represented as composed of twenty men up to eighty, appeared in the streets, marching swiftly in the direction of the wharves. It was followed by a mob, and proceeded to one of the tea-ships, which it boarded, and of which it took possession without resistance. The hatches were broken open, and the chests of tea were struck on deck, staved, and their contents were thrown into the water. The whole proceedings were conducted in the most orderly manner, and with little or no noise, the labourers seldom speaking. So much mystery attended this affair, that it is not easy, even at this remote day, to ascertain all the particulars; and, although the names of the actors have been mentioned openly of late, for a long period apprehensions are said to have been entertained, by some engaged—men of wealth

—that they might yet be made the subjects of a prosecution for damages, by the East India Company. Three hundred and forty-two chests of tea were destroyed, which was probably the cargo of a single ship, the two others quitting the port soon after.

This daring act was followed by the Boston Port Bill, a political measure that was equally high-handed, since it denied the people of the town all direct participation in commerce. This sudden check, at twenty days' notice, to the trade of a place that, the previous year, had seen 411 clearances, and 587 entries, to and from foreign ports, produced much distress in the town itself, and greater indignation throughout the country. It had been the misfortune of England, never to understand the character of the people of the American colonies; for, accustomed to dependencies that had been humbled by conquest, she had not yet learned to appreciate the spirit of those who were rapidly shooting up into political manhood by their own efforts, and who had only placed themselves in the situation they occupied, because they had found the liberty of England herself, insufficient for their opinions and wants.

The people now began seriously to prepare for an appeal to force, and they profited by the liberty that was still left them, to organise military corps, with a view to recover that which they had lost. A Congress of representatives from the different colonies convened, and a system of organisation and concert was adopted, that served to unite as many as possible in the struggle that was fast approaching.

Towards the close of the year 1774, various steps were taken in different parts of the country, that had a direct bearing on the civil war that was known to be at hand. Laws had been passed in England, prohibiting the exportation of arms and military supplies to America, and the cannon and powder of the Crown were seized at various points, either by the local governments, or by private individuals. Twenty-six guns, of different calibers, were found on Fort Island and carried to Providence, and the people of Rhode Island are said to have got possession, in the whole, of quite forty guns, by these bold measures. At Portsmouth, New Hampshire, a body of 400 men proceeded to the castle, at the harbour's mouth, kept the garrison in check, and breaking open the magazine, they carried off one hundred barrels of powder.

While means like these were used to collect the necessary military equipments, provisions, as well as arms, were collected in different parts of the country, in readiness for a campaign. Among other dépôts of this nature one had been made at Concord, a small town at the distance of eighteen miles from Boston, and General Gage, who commanded the British forces in America, deemed it essential that it should be destroyed. A strong detachment was sent on this service, and it fell in with a small body of American minutemen at Lexington. These militia were dispersed by a volley, in which a few men were killed. This affair has always been considered the commencement of the War of the Revolution; and justly, as the hostilities which were then commenced did not cease, until the Independence of the Colonies was acknowledged by Treaty. The

British proceeded to Concord, where they effected their object though not without resistance. The people now began to collect in force, and as soon as the British resumed their march, on their return to Boston, they were assailed by the former from behind the walls and fences. So vigorously were the troops pressed on this occasion, that it is thought they must have surrendered, had they not been met by a strong reinforcement, commanded by Lord Percy, which enabled them to halt and recover their breath. As soon as the march was resumed, however, the provincials renewed the attack, and the British did not succeed in gaining a place of security, until they reached Charlestown neck. In this affair the loss of the Americans has been ascertained to have amounted to 50 killed, 34 wounded, and 4 missing; that of the British to 73 killed, 174 wounded, and 26 prisoners.

The intelligence of this important event circulated like a raging fire throughout the country, and it was received every where as a call to battle. Reserve was thrown aside; the population flew to arms, and the military stores of the Crown were seized wherever they could be found. An irregular body of 20,000 men appeared before Boston, with incredible rapidity, and formed a line confining the royal army to the occupation of the town. With a view to reduce their enemies to still narrower limits, Breed's Hill, a height that commands the inner harbor of Boston, was seized, and a redoubt commenced. This step brought on the combat that has since been termed the Battle of Bunker's Hill, one of the most extraordinary conflicts of modern times, and which may be said to have given birth to American Independence. Washington was appointed Commander in Chief by the Congress of the United Colonies, and the war commenced under the usual laws of civilised nations, with the exception of the formality of a declaration.

CHAPTER IV.

Privateers—First naval action of the Revolution—Schooner *Lee*, Capt. Manly, captures the English brig *Nancy*—Congress orders the construction of vessels of war—Apportionment of the first officers of the navy—Its management—Esek Hopkins, Esq. appointed "Commander in Chief"—First regular cruisers—Expedition of Commodore Hopkins—Contest with the *Glasgow*—The *Edward* captured by the *Lexington*

THE thirteen United Colonies that now commenced a struggle with the mother country, not to obtain a political independence, for few thought of so great a change when blood was first shed, but to regain rights that were inherent in the governing principles of the institutions under which they had long lived, and which were assured to them formally in a variety of ways, possessed but scanty means to contend with a power like that of Britain. Their population was less than three millions, their pecuniary resources were of no great

amount, and their military preparations insignificant. But the fire of true patriotism had been kindled, and that which in other nations is effected by means of laboured combinations and political management, the people of America were bent on doing of their own voluntary motion and united efforts. The colonies of New England, in particular, which possessed a population trained to liberty; hardy, simple, ingenious and brave; rose as it might be to a man, and as this was the part of the country in which the flame broke out, thither we must first direct our attention in order to find the earliest evidences of its intensity.

On the ocean, the preparations for the struggle were even smaller than those which had been made on the land. Congress had done nothing, and the provisions for naval defence which, from time to time, had existed among the different colonies, had never amounted to more than maintaining the few guarda-costas already mentioned, or to the temporary exertions of an expedition. As soon as the struggle commenced in earnest, however, the habits of the people, their aptitude for sea service, and the advantages of both a public and a private nature, that were to be obtained from successful cruising, induced thousands to turn longing eyes to an element that promised so many flattering results. Nothing but the caution of Congress, which body was indisposed at first to act as if general warfare, instead of a redress of grievances, was its object, prevented a rushing towards the private cruisers, that would probably have given the commerce of England a heavier and a more sudden blow, than it had ever yet received. But a different policy was pursued, and the orders to capture, first issued, were confined to vessels bringing stores and supplies to the British forces in America. It was as late as the 10th of Nov. 1775, before Massachusetts, the colony which was the seat of war, and which may be said to have taken the lead in the revolt, established courts of admiralty, and enacted laws for the encouragement of nautical enterprise. Washington followed this example by granting commissions to vessels to cruise in the vicinity of Boston, with the object already stated. But a due examination of the practical measures of that day, will render it necessary to separate the subject into three branches; viz. one that refers solely to the exertions of private, and frequently of unauthorised adventures; another that shall speak of the proceedings of the different colonies; and a last, which more properly comprises the theme of this work, that shall refer to the policy pursued by Congress, in behalf of the entire nation. In making these distinctions, we shall be compelled to use brevity, as but few authentic authorities now exist, and because the sameness and unimportance of many of the details deprive the subject of any interest beyond that which is connected with a proper understanding of the true condition of the country.

The first nautical enterprise that succeeded the battle of Lexington, was one purely of private adventure. The intelligence of this conflict was brought to Machias in Maine, on Saturday, the 9th of May, 1775. An armed schooner in the service of the crown, called the *Margaretta*, was lying in port, with two sloops under her convoy,

that were loading with lumber on behalf of the King's government.

The bearers of the news were enjoined to be silent, a plan to capture the *Margaretta* having been immediately projected among some of the more spirited of the inhabitants. The next day being Sunday, it was hoped that the officers of the schooner might be seized while in church, but the scheme failed in consequence of the precipitation of some engaged. Captain Moore, who commanded the *Margaretta*, saw the assailants, and, with his officers, escaped through the windows of the church to the shore, where they were protected by the guns of their vessel. The alarm was now taken, springs were got on the *Margaretta's* cables, and a few harmless shot were fired over the town, by way of intimidation. After a little delay, however, the schooner dropped down below the town, to a distance exceeding a league. Here she was followed, summoned to surrender, and fired on from a high bank, which her own shot could not reach. The *Margaretta* again weighed, and running into the bay, at the confluence of the two rivers, anchored.

The following morning, which was Monday, the 11th of May, four young men took possession of one of the lumber sloops, and bringing her alongside of a wharf, they gave three cheers as a signal for volunteers. On explaining that their intentions were to make an attack on the *Margaretta*, a party of about thirty-five athletic men was soon collected. Arming themselves with fire-arms, pitchforks, and axes, and throwing a small stock of provisions into the sloop, these spirited freemen made sail on their craft, with a light breeze at northwest. When the *Margaretta* observed the approach of the sloop she weighed and crowded sail to avoid a conflict that was every way undesirable, her commander not yet being apprised of all the facts that had occurred near Boston. In jibing, the schooner carried away her main-boom, but continuing to stand on, she ran into Holmes's Bay, and took a spar out of a vessel that was lying there. While these repairs were making, the sloop hove in sight again, and the *Margaretta* stood out to sea, in the hope of avoiding her. The breeze freshened, and, with the wind on the quarter, the sloop proved to be the better sailer. So anxious was the *Margaretta* to avoid a collision, that Captain Moore now cut away his boats; but finding this ineffectual, and that his assailants were fast closing with him, he opened a fire, the schooner having an armament of four light guns, and fourteen swivels. A man was killed on board the sloop, which immediately returned the fire with a wall piece. This discharge killed the man at the *Margaretta's* helm, and cleared her quarter-deck. The schooner broached to, when the sloop gave a general discharge. Almost at the same instant the two vessels came foul of each other. A short conflict now took place with musketry, Captain Moore throwing hand grenades, with considerable effect, in person. This officer was immediately afterwards shot down, however, when the people of the sloop boarded and took possession of their prize.

The loss of life in this affair was not very great, though twenty men, on both sides, are said to have been killed and wounded. The

force of the *Margaretta*, even in men, was much the most considerable, though the crew of no regular cruiser can ever equal in spirit and energy a body of volunteers assembled on an occasion like this. There was originally no commander in the sloop, but previously to engaging the schooner, Jeremiah O'Brien was selected for that station. This affair was the Lexington of the sea, for like that celebrated land conflict, it was a rising of the people against a regular force, was characterised by a long chase, a bloody struggle, and a triumph. It was also the first blow struck on the water, after the war of the American Revolution had actually commenced.

The armament of the *Margaretta* was transferred to a sloop, and Mr. O'Brien made an attack on two small English cruisers that were said to have been sent out from Halifax, expressly to capture him. By separating these vessels, he took them both, with little resistance, and the prisoners were all carried to Watertown, where the provincial legislature of Massachusetts was then assembled. The gallantry and good conduct of Mr. O'Brien was so generally admired, that he was immediately appointed a captain in the marine of the colony, and sent on the coast with his two last prizes, with orders to intercept vessels bringing supplies to the royal forces.

Many adventures or enterprises, more or less resembling these of Captain O'Brien, took place on different parts of the coast, though none of so brilliant and successful a character. By way of retaliation, and with a view to intimidate, the English commander-in-chief, Admiral Graves, sent a force under the orders of Captain Mowat, to destroy the town of Falmouth, and four hundred buildings were burned. An attempt to land, however, was repulsed, when the ships retired. This and similar steps, produced the law of Massachusetts, already mentioned as having been passed in Nov. 1775, granting commissions and directing the seizure of British vessels under certain circumstances, and which consequently put an end to the expeditions we have classed among the unauthorised.

The colony of Massachusetts had recourse to energetic measures for annoying the enemy on the coast, and for procuring military supplies. Many small vessels were fitted out by that as well as by other colonies, and ships were sent in different directions with a view to purchase the stores that could not be seized.

The want of powder, in particular, was so severely felt, that all practicable means were adopted with a desire to obtain it. Among others, General Washington borrowed two schooners of Massachusetts and sent them into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, under the orders of Captain Broughton, to intercept two brigs, that were known to be bound to Quebec, with military stores. The brigs were not seen, but ten other English vessels were captured by Captain Broughton, all of which were released as not coming within the hostilities meditated by Congress.

That body, however, was by no means blind to the importance of naval means of defence, without which no war can ever be conducted with credit and success by a country situated like America; and we now have properly arrived at the period when it is necessary

to advert to the acts and legislation of the General Government on this interesting subject.

Soon after he assumed the command of the troops before Boston, General Washington, who so deeply felt the want of munitions of war of nearly every description, issued several commissions to different small vessels, giving their commanders instructions to cruise in or near Massachusetts Bay, in order to intercept the British store ships.

The first vessel that got to sea under this arrangement, was the schooner *Lee*, Captain John Manly, which sailed from Marblehead near the close of November. On the 29th, Captain Manly fell in with and captured the English brig *Nancy*, having on board ordnance stores, several brass guns, a considerable stock of fire-arms, and various military supplies. Among other things of this nature, was a large mortar, which was justly deemed an important addition to the means of a besieging army; for, up to this time, the Americans before Boston were particularly in want of artillery of every sort. On the 8th of December, Captain Manly captured three more store-ships, and succeeded in getting all his prizes safely into port.

Although it may not be strictly true to term the *Lee*, and the other small cruisers similarly employed, the first vessels that ever belonged to the General Government of this country, they may be deemed the first that ever actually sailed with authority to cruise in behalf of the entire republic. But, while we accord this precedence to Captain Manly and his associates, who acted under the orders of Washington, Congress itself had not been altogether idle, and it is probable that the Commander-in-Chief took the step just mentioned in accordance with the expressed views of that body.

The first legislation of Congress on the subject of a navy, preceded the law of Massachusetts, in point of time, though the act was worded with greater reserve. On the 13th of October, 1775, a law passed ordering one vessel of 10 guns, and another of 14 guns to be equipped as national cruisers, and to be sent to the eastward on a cruise of three months, to intercept supplies for the royal troops. On the 29th of the same month a resolution passed denying to private ships of war and merchant vessels the right to wear pennants in the presence of "continental ships, or vessels of war," without the permission of the commanding officers of the latter. This law was framed in a proper spirit, and manifested an intention to cause the authorised agents of the public on the high sea, to be properly respected; it excites a smile, however, when we remember that the whole marine of the country consisted, at the time, of two small vessels that were not yet equipped. The next day another law passed, authorising the fitting out of two more cruisers, one to carry 20, and the other 36 guns.

A change in this cautious policy was produced by the depredations committed by the vessels under the command of Captain Mowat. When the intelligence of that ruthless proceeding reached Philadelphia, it produced a general prize law, with authority to capture all British vessels that were in any manner connected with

the pending struggle. As the country still acknowledged its connexion with the crown, perhaps this reserve in conducting the war, was, in a measure, due to sound policy. This law was followed by another, passed December 13th, ordering 13 sail of cruisers, to be constructed. Of the latter vessels, three were to be of 24 guns, five of 28, and five of 32. Thus Congress, previously to the end of the year 1775, had authorised a regular marine, to consist of seventeen cruisers, varying in force from 10 to 32 guns. The keels of the ships alluded to in the last law, were ordered to be laid, in the four colonies of New England, in New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland. The following is a list of their names and respective rates, as well as of the colony where each was built, viz:

Washington,	32—Pennsylvania.
Raleigh,	32—New Hampshire.
Hancock,	32—Massachusetts.
Randolph,	32—Pennsylvania.
Warren,	32—Rhode Island.
Virginia,	28—Maryland.
Trumbull,	28—Connecticut.
Effingham,	28—Pennsylvania.
Congress,	28—New York.
Providence,	28—Rhode Island.
Boston,	24—Massachusetts.
Delaware,	24—Pennsylvania.
Montgomery,	24—New York.

These vessels appear to have been judiciously appointed in order to effect the object in view. The resources of America did not admit of the construction of ships of a size fit to contend with the fleets of England, and had the colonies been in a condition even to make such an exhibition of their power, the time necessary to organise a proper marine, the want of navy yards, and the impossibility of procuring, in season, naval stores of the required quality, would have prevented them from attempting it. The ships ordered were large enough to resist the small cruisers of the crown, and were well adapted to destroy convoys, and to capture transports and store-ships. We are not, however, to estimate their force by the manner of rating, as compared with similar rates in our own time, the art of ship-building and the mode of equipping vessels of war, having undergone great changes since the commencement of the American Revolution. Frigates, at that day, were usually vessels varying from six hundred to a thousand tons, and rarely carried in their main deck batteries, guns of a metal heavier than eighteen pounders. There was usually no spar-deck, but the fore-castle and quarter-deck were connected by gangways, with gratings to cover a part, or even all of the intermediate space. The armaments above were light sixes, nines, or twelves, according to the respective rates, but were commonly of trifling account. Carronades had not then been invented, though they first came into use during this war. This gun obtains its name

from the circumstance of its having been first made at the village of Carron, in Scotland, a place celebrated for its foundries, as the bayonet derives its appellation from Bayonne in France. It is believed it was first used with effect, in the battle between Lord Rodney and the Comte de Grasse, when it was found to be an arm of more efficiency than had been generally anticipated. For some time its use was confined to the English, nor did it make its way into the American marine, until the commencement of the present century, or the very close of the last. Most of the ships mentioned in the list just given, were armed with nines and twelves, having sixes, and even fours, on their quarter-decks and forecastles. It is thought that there was no regular eighteen pounder frigate constructed under the laws of 1775.

Bad as was the condition of the Colonies, as respects naval stores, and the munitions of war, the country might be said to be even worse off for persons suited to form a navy list. There was no lack of competent navigators, or of brave seamen, but the high moral qualities which are indispensable to the accomplished officer, were hardly to be expected among those who had received all their training in the rude and imperfect schools of the merchant service. Still, as a whole, the merchant seamen of America were of a class superior to those of most other nations; the very absence of a regular marine, which induced young men of enterprise to incur the dangers of the seas in this mode in preference to remaining on shore, and the moral superiority of the level of the population, producing such a result. It has been said that the gentry of the country had begun to place their sons in the British marine, previously to the commencement of this war; but, while many instances occurred in which Americans threw up their commissions in the British army, in preference to serving against their native land, very few of those who had taken service in the navy, followed their example. The second nature that the seaman acquires in time, appears to have drawn the cord too tight to suffer it to be snapped even by the violent struggles of a civil war, and most of the young men who were born in the colonies, and who found themselves arrayed against their proper country, on board the ships of the king, continued to serve with the undiminished zeal and singleness of purpose, that is apt to distinguish the fidelity of a seaman to his flag.* The Committee of Congress, to which the duties of a Navy Department were assigned, was compelled, in consequence of these difficulties, to select the new corps of officers, principally, from such conspicuous persons among the masters and mates of merchant ships as the country afforded; a few of those who had been trained in the English marine, but who had left it previously to the struggle, excepted. The result was such as might have been anticipated. While many gallant and suitable men were chosen, some of the corps had little to recommend them besides their practical knowledge of seamanship. These were valuable qualities, certainly, but the habits of subordination, the high feelings of personal pride and self-

* We can discover but a single instance of an American's quitting the English navy on account of the war, though it is probable more occurred.

respect that create an *esprit de corps*, and the moral courage and lofty sentiments that come in time, to teach the trained officer to believe any misfortune preferable to professional disgrace, were not always to be expected under such circumstances. In short, a service created in this informal manner, must necessarily depend more on accidental and natural qualities for its success, than on that acquired character which has been found to be so competent a substitute, and which is altogether indispensable when there is a demand for the complicated and combined movements that can alone render any arm efficient throughout a series of years. It is true, that the colonies had possessed an irregular school for the training of officers, in their provincial cruisers, or guarda-costas; but it was neither sufficiently extended, not sufficiently disciplined, to afford the supply that was now demanded by the extraordinary exigencies of the times.

The documents connected with the early history of the navy of the country, were never kept with sufficient method, and the few that did exist have become much scattered and lost, in consequence of there having been no regular navy department; the authority of this branch of the government having been exercised throughout the whole war, by Committees and Boards, the members of which have probably retained many documents of interest, as vouchers to authenticate their own proceedings.

Among other defects it has become impossible to establish, in all cases, who did and who did not actually serve in the marine of the United States, officers so frequently passing from the privateers into the public vessels, and from the public vessels to the privateers, as to leave this important branch of our subject involved in much obscurity. Before we enter more fully into the details on which reliance can be placed, it may be well, also, to explain that the officers in the navy of the Confederation derived their authority from different sources, a circumstance that adds to the difficulties just mentioned. In a good many instances Congress made the appointments by direct resolutions of its own, as will appear in the case of the officers first named. Subsequently, the Marine Committee possessed this power; and, in the end, not only did the diplomatic agents of the Government abroad exercise this high trust, but even the commanders of squadrons and of ships were put in possession of blank commissions to be filled at their particular discretion. It will easily be understood, how much this looseness in managing an interest of so much moment, increases the difficulty of obtaining the truth.

That the brave men who acted under the authority of Washington, at the commencement of the contest, were not in the navy, is evident from the circumstance that several of them obtained rank in the service, as the reward of their conduct while cruising in the sort of semi-official vessels that have already been mentioned. It has been said, that the first regular legislation of Congress, in reference to a marine, with a view to resist the aggressions of the British Parliament, dates from a resolution of that body, passed the 13th of October, 1775. This resolution directed a committee of three, Messrs. Deane, Langdon and Gadsden, to fit out two swift-sailing vessels, the one of ten,

and the other of fourteen guns, to cruise to the eastward, to intercept the supplies and transports intended for the British army at Boston. Under this law it is believed that a brig called the *Lexington*, and a sloop named the *Providence* were equipped; though it does not appear that either went on the particular duty named in the resolution. On the 30th of the same month, the committee was increased to seven, and a ship of 36 guns, and another of 20, were ordered to be provided. Under this law the *Alfred* and *Columbus* were purchased, though neither was of the force implied by the highest rate named. The first of these ships is said to have had a main-deck battery of 20 nines, while her armament on the quarter-deck and fore-castle, varied in the course of her service, from ten guns to two. At the end of her career she carried no guns above. Less is known of the *Columbus*, but she is believed to have had a gun-deck battery of 18 nines. Both were clumsy and crank ships, and neither proved to be a very good sailer.

On the 13th of December, of the same year, Congress directed the thirteen ships of war to be built, and the next day the Marine Committee was so far increased as to contain one member from each colony; all the proceedings that have yet been mentioned, having been directed rather to a redress of grievances, than to independence.

It will aid in understanding how complicated the business of the navy became, if we here give a brief outline of the various modes that were adopted in managing its affairs. To the committee last named, very extensive powers were given; but in November, 1776, a "Continental Navy Board," of three competent persons, was established as subordinate to this committee; one being termed the "Eastern Board," and the other the "Board of the Middle District." A large portion of the executive functions of the "Marine Committee" devolved on these two "Boards." In October, 1779, this mode of proceeding was changed, and a "Board of Admiralty" was established, consisting of three commissioners who were not in Congress, and two that were. Of this Board any three were competent to act. In January, 1781, James Reed was appointed, by special resolution, to manage the affairs of the "Navy Board" in the "Middle Department;" and in February of the same year, Alexander McDougall, a Major General in the army, who had been a seaman in his youth, was chosen "Secretary of the Marine." In August of the same year, the entire system was changed, by the appointment of an "Agent of the Marine," who had full control of the service, subject to the resolutions of Congress, and who superseded all the committees, boards, and agents, that had been previously established by law. Here closed the legislation of Congress on this branch of the subject, though we shall add that the duties of "Agent of Marine," subsequently devolved on the "Superintendent of Finances," the celebrated Robert Morris, a gentleman, who appears, throughout the war, to have had more control over the affairs of the navy, than any other civilian in the country. To return to the order of time.

On the 22d of December, 1775, Congress passed the following resolutions, viz :—

“Resolved, that the following naval officers be appointed :

Esek Hopkins, Esquire, Commander-in-Chief.

Dudley Saltonstall, Captain of the Alfred.

Abraham Whipple, do. do. Columbus.

Nicholas Biddle, do. do. Andrea Doria.

John B. Hopkins, do. do. Cabot.

First Lieutenants, John Paul Jones, Rhodes Arnold, ———
Stansbury, Hoysted Hacker, Jonathan Pitcher.

Second Lieutenants, Benjamin Seabury, Joseph Olney, Elisha Warner, Thomas Weaver, ——— McDougal.

Third Lieutenants, John Fanning, Ezekiel Burroughs, Daniel Vaughan.

“Resolved, that the pay of the Commander-in-Chief of the fleet, be one hundred and twenty-five dollars a month.”

By this law it will be seen that Mr. Hopkins was not made a captain, but the “Commander-in-Chief,” a rank that was intended to correspond in the navy, to that held by Washington in the army. His official appellation, among seamen, appears to have been that of “Commodore,” though he was frequently styled “Admiral,” in the papers of that period. The captains were particularly named to the respective ships, and the law was so construed, that the lieutenants were attached to the different vessels in the order in which they were respectively named.

By this resolution, or law, it would appear that two brigs, the Andrea Doria, and the Cabot, had been purchased, most probably by the Marine Committee, previously to its passage. Of the precise force of the latter vessel no authentic account can be found, but it is thought to have been 16 sixes. It appears by a letter of Paul Jones, however, that the armament of the Doria was 14 fours, and the Cabot may have been of the same force.

The equipment of all the vessels mentioned, as well as of two or three more of less size, was going on in the autumn of 1775, the appointment of their officers was made at the close of the year, and the first ensign ever shown by a regular American man-of-war, was hoisted in the Delaware, on board the Alfred, by the hands of Paul Jones, some time about the last of December. This event could not have occurred previously to the vote appointing a commander-in-chief, as we are expressly told that the flag was shown when that officer first repaired on board his ship. What that ensign was, is not now certainly known, but it is thought to have been a device representing a pine tree, with a rattlesnake about to strike, coiled at its root, and bearing the motto “don’t tread on me.” It is certain that such a flag was used, at the commencement of the Revolution, and on board of some of the vessels of war, though whether this was the flag worn by the Alfred is not quite so clear. Most of the privateers of the period either wore the arms of the colony from which they sailed, and by which they were authorised to cruise, or they also showed devices of their own, according to the conceits of the differ-

ent captains and owners. It was not until 1777, that Congress formally adopted the present national colours.

The first regular cruisers that ever got to sea under the new government were the *Hornet 10*, and *Wasp 8*, a sloop and a schooner that had been equipped at Baltimore by the Marine Committee, and which sailed in November, to join the squadron under Commodore Hopkins, in the *Delaware*. This passage, however, cannot properly be called a cruise. For the first of these we must refer to the squadron itself. This distinction has been claimed for the *Lexington*, Capt. Barry, and we have so stated the fact, in the earlier editions of this book; but an examination of the private papers of that officer, has shown us that he was actually employed on shore, or in the *Delaware*, for a short time after Com. Hopkins got to sea. The first regular cruise, therefore, ever made in a vessel of the United States, was that made by the squadron, of which we are about to relate the movements.

The plans of Congress had changed between the time when the vessels were first ordered and that on which they were ready for service. Commodore Hopkins was accordingly directed to proceed to the southward, with a view to act against the naval force, which was then ravaging the coast of Virginia, under Lord Dunmore. The squadron got into the Bay, and rendezvoused under Cape Henlopen, early in February. It consisted of the *Alfred 24*, *Columbus 20*, *Doria 14*, *Cabot 14*, *Providence 12*, *Hornet 10*, *Wasp 8*, and *Fly* despatch vessel. With this force Commodore Hopkins went to sea on the 17th of February. On the night of the 19th, as the squadron was steering south with a fresh breeze, the *Hornet* and *Fly* parted company, and did not join again during the cruise. No vessel of any importance was met until the ships reached Abaco, in the Bahamas, where the squadron had been ordered to rendezvous. Here Commodore Hopkins determined to make a descent on New Providence, where it was understood a considerable amount of military stores was collected. For this purpose, a body of 300 men, marines and landsmen, under the command of Captain Nichols, the senior marine officer of the service, was put into two sloops, with the hope of surprising the place. As the squadron approached the town, however, an alarm was given, when the sloops were sent in, with the *Providence 12*, and *Wasp 8*, to cover the landing. This duty was handsomely performed, and Captain Nichols got complete possession of the forts, and entire command of the place, in the course of the afternoon, and of the following morning, after a very insignificant resistance. Unfortunately, the governor, aware of the motive of the descent, found means to send away a considerable quantity of powder during the night. Near a hundred cannon, and a large quantity of other stores, however, fell into the hands of the Americans. On this occasion, the first that ever occurred in the regular American Navy, the marines under Captain Nichols, appear to have behaved with the spirit and steadiness that have distinguished the corps, from that hour down to the present moment.

After retaining possession a few days, Commodore Hopkins left

New Providence on the 17th of March, bringing away with him the governor and one or two men of note, and shaping his course to the northward. Some of the smaller vessels appear to have left him, as he proceeded along the coast, but, with the most of his force in company, he arrived off the east end of Long Island, early in April. On the 4th, he captured a tender of six guns, commanded by a son of Commodore Wallace, and on the 5th he fell in with and took a British Bomb Brig Bolton S, Lieutenant Snead.

About one o'clock in the morning of the 6th of April, the squadron being a little scattered, a large ship was discovered steering towards the Alfred. The wind was light, and the sea quite smooth, and about two, the stranger having gone about, the Cabot closed with him, and hailed. Soon after the latter fired a broadside. The first discharge of this little vessel appears to have been well directed, but her metal was altogether too light to contend with an enemy like the one she had assailed. In a few minutes she was compelled to haul aboard her tacks, to get from under the guns of her antagonist, having had her captain severely wounded, her master killed, and a good many of her people injured.

The Alfred now took the place of the Cabot, ranging handsomely alongside of the enemy and delivering her fire. Soon after, the Providence got under the stern of the English ship, and the Andrea Doria was enabled to come near enough to do some service. The Columbus was kept at a distance for want of wind. After a smart cannonade of near an hour, the block and wheel-rope of the Alfred were shot away, and the ship broached to; by which accident the enemy was enabled to rake her with effect. Being satisfied, however, that the victory was impossible, the English commander profited by this accident, to put his helm up, and brought all the American vessels astern. Sailing better than any of the squadron, most of which were deep, as well as dull, in consequence of the cannon and stores they had taken on board, the enemy slowly but steadily gained on his pursuers, though a warm cannonade was kept up by both parties until past daylight. By six o'clock the ships had got so far to the eastward, that Commodore Hopkins felt apprehensive the firing would bring out the Newport squadron, and seeing little chance of overtaking the chase, he made a signal for his vessels to haul by the wind. Capturing a tender that was in company with the ship that had escaped, the squadron now went into New London, the port to which it was bound.

The vessel that engaged the American ships, on this occasion, was the Glasgow 20, Captain Tyringham Howe, with a crew of about one hundred and fifty souls. In every thing but the number of her men the Glasgow was probably superior to any one ship in the American squadron, but her close encounter with, and eventual escape from so many vessels, reflected great credit on her commander. She was a good deal cut up, notwithstanding, and had four men killed and wounded. On the other hand, both the Alfred and the Cabot suffered materially, the former from having been raked, and the latter from lying alongside a vessel so much her superior in force.

The *Alfred* and *Cabot* had twenty-three men killed and wounded, and one man on board the *Columbus* lost an arm while in the chase.

The result of this first essay of the American navy, when announced, caused much exultation in the country. The affair was represented as a sort of victory, in which three light vessels of war had been taken, and one of force compelled to run. A short time, however, served to correct these errors, and public opinion probably went as far in the opposite extreme, where it would seem to have been permanently fixed, by subsequent historians. The great error of Commodore Hopkins was in suffering so small a vessel as the *Cabot* to run close alongside of a ship of the *Glasgow's* force, when the first attack should have been made by the *Alfred*. Had the *Cabot* delivered two or three as effectual broadsides from a favourable position, as the first she fired, while the *Glasgow* was occupied by a heavier ship, it is highly probable the enemy would have been captured. Commodore Hopkins betrayed no want of spirit, but his crew and vessel were much inferior to the regularly and long trained people of a cruiser, and to a ship properly constructed for war. The lightness of the wind, and the obscurity of a night action, contributed to the disasters, as, in such circumstances, when the ship broadsided to, it required time to get her again under the command of her helm. The reason for not continuing the chase was sufficient, and it is now known that the English squadron did come out of Newport as soon as the *Glasgow* appeared, and there can be little doubt that Commodore Hopkins would have lost all his dull sailing vessels, had he gone much farther in pursuit. It ought to be added, that the small-pox, then a malady of fatal effect, had broken out in the ships while they were at New Providence, and it probably had an influence on their efficiency. The *Doria*, in particular, was known to be nearly useless from the number of cases on board.

This was hardly the feeling of the country, notwithstanding, for nations are seldom just under disgrace, imaginary or real. Commodore Hopkins was left in command some time longer, it is true, and he carried the squadron to Rhode Island, a few weeks after his arrival, but he never made another cruise in the navy. On the 16th of October, Congress passed a vote of censure on him, for not performing the duties on which he had been sent to the southward, and on the 2d of January, 1777, by a vote of that body, he was formally dismissed from the service. No commander-in-chief was subsequently appointed, though such a measure was recommended to the national legislature by a committee of its own body, August 24th, 1781.

As an offset to the escape of the *Glasgow*, the *Lexington*, Captain Barry, which had sailed from the Delaware some weeks after the squadron got to sea, fell in with the *Edward*, an armed tender of the Liverpool, on the 17th of April, off the Capes of Virginia, and after a close and spirited action of near an hour, captured her. The *Lexington* had four of her crew killed and wounded, while the *Edward* was nearly cut to pieces, and met with a very heavy comparative loss in men.

It may better connect the history of this little brig, if we add here, that she went to the West Indies the following October, under the command of Captain Hallock, and on her return was captured near the spot where she had taken the Liverpool's tender, by the Pearl frigate. It was blowing fresh at the time, and, after taking out of his prize a few officers, and putting a crew on board of her, the commander of the Pearl ordered her crew to follow his own ship. That night the Americans rose, and overpowering the prize crew, they carried the brig into Baltimore. The *Lexington* was immediately recommissioned, under the orders of Captain Johnston, and in March of the succeeding year she sailed for Europe, where there will soon be occasion to note her movements. This little vessel mounted 16 4 lb guns, and, under Barry, had a crew of 70 souls, all told.

CHAPTER V.

Paul Jones—His first cruise as a Commander—Additional vessels ordered by Congress—Law regulating the rank of officers—The *Andrea Doria*, Capt. Biddle, takes several prizes—The *Defence*, Capt. Harding, after a sharp action, captures two English schooners—Cruise of the *Providence* and *Alfred*—Cruise of the *Reprisal* in Europe—Of the *Lexington* do.—Cruises of Capt. Wickes—*Lexington* taken—Loss of the *Reprisal*—Cruises of Capt. Conyngham.

WHEN the American squadron had got into Newport it became useless, through want of men. Many of the seamen having entered for the cruise only, and Congress having authorised the capture of all British vessels in March, so many persons were now induced to go on board the privateers, that crews were not easily obtained for the vessels of war. It is a singular feature of the times, too, that the sudden check to navigation, and the delay in authorising general captures, had driven a great many of the seamen into the army. It is also easy to imagine that the service was out of favour, after the affair with the *Glasgow*, for by events as trifling as this, are the opinions of ordinary men usually influenced.

It has been said that the vessels were carried to Providence, Rhode Island, and soldiers were borrowed from the army, in order to effect even this. At Providence, courts martial, the usual attendants of military misfortunes, were assembled to judge the delinquents. Captain Whipple, of the *Columbus*, was tried for not aiding the *Alfred* in the action with the *Glasgow*, and seems to have been acquitted. Captain Hazard of the *Providence*, was cashiered, though it does not appear on what charge.

The day after the dismissal of her former commander, or May the 10th, 1776, Paul Jones was directed by Commodore Hopkins to take charge of the *Providence*, and to carry the borrowed soldiers to New York, there to enlist a regular crew, and return to the sta-

tion. This duty having been successfully performed, the sloop was hove out, cleaned, refitted, armed and manned for a cruise. On the 13th of June, Captain Jones sailed from Newport with a convoy loaded with military stores, which he saw into Long Island Sound, a service attended with risk on account of the numerous cruisers of the enemy. While thus employed, Captain Jones covered the escape of a brig from St. Domingo, laden also with military stores, and bound to New York. This brig was soon after brought into the service, and became the *Hamden*, 14. After performing this duty, the *Providence* was employed in cruising between Boston and the Delaware, and she even ran as far south as Bermuda. On the 1st of September, while on the latter service, this little sloop made five sail, one of which was mistaken for a large merchantman. On getting near the latter vessel, she proved to be a light English frigate, and a fast sailer. After a chase of four hours by the wind, and in a cross sea, the enemy had so far gained on the *Providence* as to be within musket-shot, on her lee-quarter. The stranger had early opened with his chase guns, and the *Providence* now returned the fire with her light four pounders, showing her colours. Perceiving that capture, or some bold expedient must soon determine his fate, Captain Jones kept edging away, until he had got rather on the lee bow of the enemy, when the *Providence* suddenly went off dead before the wind, setting every thing that would draw. This unexpected manœuvre brought the two vessels within pistol-shot, but the English ship having been taken completely by surprise, before she could get her light sails set, the sloop was nearly out of reach of grape. The *Providence* sailed the best before the wind, and in less than an hour she had drawn quite beyond the reach of shot, and finally escaped. This affair has been represented as an engagement of several hours with the *Solebay*, 23, but, as has been said, it was little more than a clever artifice, in which Captain Jones discovered much steadiness and address. Not a shot touched the *Providence*, though the *Solebay* fired a hundred.

Captain Jones now went to the eastward, where he made several prizes. Here he was chased by the *Milford* 32, and finding he could easily outsail her, he kept just out of gun-shot for several hours, the enemy, who measured his distance badly, firing most of the time. This affair has also been exaggerated into a running fight.

After this chase the *Providence* went upon the coast, off Canseau, and did much damage to the enemy's fishermen, taking no less than twelve sail. - Having made sixteen prizes, in all, some of which were valuable, Captain Jones returned to Newport.

Ere the return of the *Providence*, independence was declared, and Congress had set about a more regular organisation of the navy. October the 3d, it ordered another frigate and two cutters to be built; and November the 9th, a law was passed, authorising the construction of three seventy-fours, five more frigates, a sloop of war and a packet. In January of the succeeding year, another frigate and another sloop of war, were commanded. Eight of the prizes were also directed to be taken into the service, in the course of the years

1776 and 1777, while, as the war proceeded, divers small vessels were directed to be built, or purchased.

But the most important step taken by Congress, at this time, was a law regulating the rank of the different officers, which had hitherto been very uncertain, and had led to many disputes. By a resolution passed, April the 17th, 1776, Congress had declared that rank should not be regulated by the dates of the original appointments, reserving to itself the power to say who should command, when it had ascertained who were disposed to serve. But it had now declared the nation independent of the King of Great Britain, and there was a long and bloody war in perspective, before that independence could be recognised. It was time to reduce the confused elements of the service to order, and to quiet the disputes and claims of individuals, by an exercise of sovereign power. A resolution was accordingly passed on the 10th of October, 1776, directing that the captains in the navy should take rank in the following order, viz :

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. James Nicholson, | 13. John B. Hopkins, |
| 2. John Manly, | 14. John Hodge, |
| 3. Hector McNiel, | 15. William Hallock, |
| 4. Dudley Saltonstall, | 16. Hoysted Hacker, |
| 5. Nicholas Biddle, | 17. Isaiah Robinson, |
| 6. Thomas Thompson, | 18. John Paul Jones, |
| 7. John Barry, | 19. James Josiah, |
| 8. Thomas Read, | 20. Elisha Hinman, |
| 9. Thomas Grennall, | 21. Joseph Olney, |
| 10. Charles Alexander, | 22. James Robinson, |
| 11. Lambert Wickes, | 23. John Young, |
| 12. Abraham Whipple, | 24. Elisha Warner. |

The Marine Committee was empowered to arrange the rank of the inferior officers. At this time Commodore Hopkins was commander-in-Chief, and he continued to serve in that capacity until the commencement of the following January, when Captain Nicholson became the senior officer of the navy, with the rank of captain only. When the law regulating rank was passed, the vessels of the navy, in service, or in the course of construction, were as follows ; the word building, which is put after most of them, referring as well to those which had just been launched as to those that were still on the stocks ; a few of the former, however, were nearly ready for sea.

List of vessels in the United States Navy, October, 1776.

Hancock,	32,	building at Boston.
Randolph,	32,	do. Philadelphia.
Raleigh,	32,	do. Portsmouth, N. H.
Washington,	32,	do. Philadelphia.
Warren,	32,	do. Rhode Island.
Trumbull,	28,	do. Connecticut.
Effingham,	28,	do. Philadelphia.
Congress,	28,	do. Poughkeepsie, N. Y
Virginia,	28,	do. Maryland.

Providence,	28,	building at Rhode Island.
Boston,	24,	do. Boston.
Delaware,	24,	do. Philadelphia.
Montgomery,	24,	do. Poughkeepsie, N. Y.
Alfred,	24,	in service.
Columbus,	20,	do.
Reprisal,	16,	do.
Cabot,	16,	do.
Hamden	14,	do.
Lexington,	14,	do.
Andrea Doria,	14,	do.
Providence,	12,	do.
Sachem,	10,	do.
Independence,	10,	do.
Wasp,	8,	do.
Musquito,	4,	do.
Fly,	—	do.

To these vessels, many of which never got to sea, must be added several small cruisers, that were employed by the American Commissioners in Europe ; the histories of which will be given in their proper places ; and the vessel that parted company from Commodore Hopkins' squadron, on its way to New Providence. This vessel, the *Hornet*, suffered much before she got in, and it is believed she was employed very little afterwards.

When the squadron, under Commodore Hopkins, broke up, all the ships did not remain idle, but the *Columbus* 20, made a cruise, under Captain Whipple, to the eastward, and took a few prizes. The *Andrea Doria* 14, Captain Biddle, went in the same direction, also, and was even more successful than the *Providence* in annoying the enemy. This vessel, a little brig, carrying 14 fours, actually took two armed transports filled with soldiers, and made prizes of so many merchantmen, that, it is affirmed on plausible authority, when she got back into the Delaware, but five of the common men who composed her original crew were in her ; the rest having been put in the prizes, and their places supplied by volunteers from among the prisoners. Captain Biddle gained much credit for this cruise, and on his return, he was appointed to the command of the *Randolph* 32, then recently launched. One of the transports, however, was retaken by the *Cerberus* frigate, and the other by her own people, but was again captured, and brought in.

While the United States' cruisers were thus active in intercepting the British transports on the high seas, the colony cruisers and privateers were busy in the same way in-shore. Boston had been evacuated by the enemy on the 17th of March, of this year, but vessels continued to arrive from England until midsummer ; the fact not being known in time to prevent their steering towards the wrong port. No less than thirty sail fell into the hands of the Americans, in consequence of these mistakes. As one of the occurrences of this nature was, in a measure, connected with a circumstance just related in the cruise of the *Doria*, it may be properly given here.

The Connecticut colony brig *Defence* 14, Captain Harding, left Plymouth, Massachusetts, early on the morning of the 17th of June, and, on working out into the bay, a desultory firing was heard to the northward. The *Defence* crowded sail in the direction of the cannonading, and about dusk she fell in with four light American schooners, which had been in a running fight with two British transports, that had proved too heavy for them. The transports, after beating off the schooners, had gone into Nantasket Roads and anchored. One of the schooners was the *Lee* 8, Captain Waters, in the service of Massachusetts, the little cruiser that had so successfully begun the maritime warfare under Captain Manly. The three others were privateers.

After laying his plans with the commanders of the schooners, Captain Harding stood into the roads, and about eleven o'clock, at night, he anchored between the transports, within pistol-shot. The schooners followed, but did not approach near enough to be of much service. Some hailing now passed, and Captain Harding ordered the enemy to strike. A voice from the largest English vessel answered, "Ay, ay—I'll strike," and a broadside was immediately poured into the *Defence*. A sharp action, that lasted more than an hour, followed, when both the English vessels struck. These transports contained near two hundred soldiers of the same corps as those shortly after taken by the *Doria*, and on board the largest of them was Lieutenant Colonel Campbell, who commanded the regiment.

In this close and sharp conflict, the *Defence* was a good deal cut up aloft, and she had nine men wounded. The transports lost eighteen killed, and a large number wounded. Among the slain was Major Menzies, the officer who had answered the hail in the manner stated.

The next morning the *Defence*, with the schooners in company, saw a sail in the bay, and gave chase. The stranger proved to be another transport, with more than a hundred men of the same regiment on board. Thus did about five hundred men, of one of the best corps in the British army, fall into the hands of the Americans, by means of these light cruisers. It should be remembered that, in this stage of the war, every capture of this nature was of double importance to the cause, as it not only weakened the enemy, but checked his intention of treating the American prisoners as rebels, by giving the colonists the means of retaliation, as well as of exchange. Colonel Campbell was subsequently imprisoned by Washington, to compel the English to extend better treatment to the Americans who had fallen into their hands.

To return to the vessels left at Rhode Island. When Captain Jones came in from his last cruise in the *Providence*, a project was formed to send a small squadron under his orders to the coast of Nova Scotia, with the double view of distressing the British trade, and of liberating about a hundred Americans who were said to be confined in the coal pits of that region. For this purpose the *Alfred* 24, *Hamden* 14, and *Providence* 12, were put under the orders of Captain Jones; but not having men enough for all three, that officer

selected the two first for his purpose. While clearing the port, the *Hamden* got on a ledge of rocks, and sustained material damage. The crew of the *Hamden* were now transferred to the *Providence*, and in the month of November Captain Jones got to sea, with both vessels rather short manned. A few days out, the *Alfred* made one or two small captures, and soon after she fell in with, and, after a short combat, took the armed ship *Mellish*, loaded with supplies for the army that was then assembling in Canada, to compose the expedition under General Burgoyne. On board this vessel, in addition to many other articles of the last importance, were ten thousand suits of uniform, in charge of a company of soldiers. It was said at the time, that the *Mellish* was the most valuable English ship that had then fallen into the hands of the Americans. Of so much importance did Captain Jones consider this vessel, that he announced his intention to keep his prize in sight, and to sink her in preference to letting her fall into the enemy's hands again. This resolution, however, was changed by circumstances.

The *Providence* had parted company in the night, and having taken a letter of marque, from Liverpool, the *Alfred* was making the best of her way to Boston, with a view to get the *Mellish* in, when on the edge of George's Banks, she made the *Milford 32*, the frigate that had chased Captain Jones the previous cruise, while in command of the *Providence*. The enemy was to windward, but there was not time for him to close before dark. The *Alfred* and the letter of marque hauled up between the frigate and the other prizes, in order to cover them, and directions were given to the latter to stand on the same tack all night, regardless of signals. At midnight the *Alfred* and letter of marque tacked, and the latter showed a top-light until morning. This artifice succeeded, the *Milford* appearing in chase of the *Alfred* when the day dawned, while the *Mellish* and her consorts had all disappeared in the southern board.

The *Milford* had run to leeward in the course of the night, and was now on the *Alfred's* lee quarter. Some manœuvring took place to ascertain the stranger's force, for it was not then known that the ship in sight was actually a frigate. In the course of the day, the *Alfred* was compelled to carry sail hard, but she escaped, though the letter of marque fell into the enemy's hands. After eluding her enemy, and covering all her prizes, the one just mentioned excepted, the *Alfred* went into Boston, where she found the rest of the vessels, and where she landed her prisoners. Another officer took charge of the ship, and Captain Jones, who had been flattered with the hope of having a still larger force put under his orders, was placed so low on the list by the new regulation of navy rank, as to be obliged to look round for a single ship, and that, too, of a force inferior to the one he had just commanded.

While this service was in the course of execution at the north, several small cruisers had been sent into the West Indies, to convoy, in quest of arms, or to communicate with the different public agents in that quarter. We have seen the manner in which the *Lexington* had been captured and retaken on her return passage from this

station, and we have now to allude to a short cruise of the *Reprisal*, Captain Wickes, in the same quarter. This ship sailed early in the summer, for Martinique, capturing several prizes by the way. When near her port, the English sloop of war *Shark* 16, Captain Chapman, laid her close alongside, and commenced a brisk attack, the *Reprisal* being both lighter than the enemy, and short-handed. Captain Wickes made so gallant a defence, however, that the *Shark* was repulsed with loss, and he got into the island with credit, hundreds having witnessed the affair from the shore. As this occurred early in the season, and before the declaration of independence, the *Shark* followed the *Reprisal* in, and her captain demanded that the governor should deliver up the American ship as a pirate. This demand was refused of course, and shortly after Captain Wickes returned home. With a view to connect the train of events, we will now follow this excellent officer to the European seas.

The *Reprisal* was the first American man of war that ever showed herself in the other hemisphere. She sailed from home not long after the Declaration of Independence, and appeared in France in the autumn of 1776, bringing in with her several prizes, and having Dr. Franklin on board as a passenger. A few privateers had preceded her, and slight difficulties had occurred in relation to some of their prizes that had gone into Spain, but it is believed these were the first English captured ships that had entered France since the commencement of the American Revolution. The English ambassador complained of this infraction of the treaty between the two countries, but means were found to dispose of the prizes without detection. The *Reprisal* having refitted, soon sailed towards the Bay of Biscay, on another cruise. Here she captured several more vessels, and among the rest a king's packet that plied between Falmouth and Lisbon. When the cruise was up, Captain Wickes went into Nantes, taking his prize with him. The complaints of the English now became louder, and the American commissioners were secretly admonished of the necessity of using greater reserve. The prizes were directed to quit France, though the *Reprisal*, being leaky, was suffered to remain in port, in order to refit. The former were taken into the offing, and sold; the state of the times rendering these informal proceedings necessary. Enormous losses to the captors were the consequences, while it is not improbable that the gains of the purchasers had their influence in blinding the local authorities to the character of the transaction. The business appears to have been managed with dexterity, and the proceeds of the sales, such as they were, proved of great service to the agents of government, by enabling them to purchase other vessels.

In April, the *Lexington* 14, Captain Johnston, arrived in France, and the old difficulties were renewed. But the commissioners at Paris, who had been authorised to equip vessels, appoint officers, and do other matters to annoy the enemy, now planned a cruise that surpassed any thing of the sort that had yet been attempted in Europe under the American flag. Captain Wickes was directed to proceed to sea, with his own vessel and the *Lexington*, and to go

directly off Ireland, in order to intercept a convoy of linen ships that was expected to sail about that time. A cutter of ten guns, called the *Dolphin*, that had been detained by the commissioners to carry despatches to America, was diverted from her original destination and placed under the orders of Captain Wickes. The *Dolphin* was commanded by Lieutenant S. Nicholson, a brother of the senior captain, and a gentleman who subsequently died himself at the head of the service.

Captain Wickes, in command of this light squadron, sailed from Nantes about the commencement of June, going first into the Bay of Biscay, and afterwards entirely around Ireland, sweeping the sea before him of every thing that was not of a force to render an attack hopeless. The linen ships were missed, but many vessels were taken or destroyed. As the American cruisers approached the French coast, on their return, a line of battle ship gave chase, and followed them nearly into port. The *Lexington* and *Dolphin* appear to have escaped without much difficulty, by separating, but the *Reprisal* was so hard pressed, as to be obliged to saw her bulwarks, and even to cut away some of her timbers; expedients that were then much in favour among the seamen of the day, though of questionable utility.

This was the first exploit of the kind in the war, and its boldness and success seem to have produced so much sensation in England, that the French government was driven to the necessity of entirely throwing aside the mask, or of taking some more decided step in relation to these cruisers. Not being yet prepared for war, it resorted to the latter expedient. The *Reprisal* and *Lexington* were ordered to be seized and held, until security was given that they would quit the European seas, while the prizes were commanded to leave France without delay. The latter were accordingly taken outside the port, and disposed of to French merchants, in the same informal manner, and with the same loss, as in the previous cases, while the vessels of war prepared to return home.

In September, the *Lexington* sailed from Morlaix, in which port she had taken refuge in the chase, and next day she fell in with the British man-of-war-cutter *Alert*, Lieutenant Bazely, a vessel of a force a trifle less than her own, when an engagement took place. The lightness of the vessels, and the roughness of the weather, rendered the fire on both sides, very ineffective, and after an action of two hours and a half, the *Lexington* had expended nearly all of her powder, without subduing her gallant opponent. The *Alert*, however, had suffered so much aloft, as to enable the brig to leave her. Notwithstanding this advantage, so much activity was shown on board the English vessel, that, after a chase of four hours, she was enabled to get alongside of the *Lexington* again, while the latter was herself repairing damages. A one-sided battle now occurred, the *Lexington* not having it in her power to keep up a fire of any moment, and after receiving that of his persevering antagonist for another hour, Captain Johnston was compelled to strike, to save the lives of his crew. Thus closed the brief history of the gallant little cruiser that

is known to have first borne the regular American flag in a victory upon the ocean. Her career was short, but it was not without credit and usefulness. When taken, she had been in service about one year and eight months, in which time she had been under three commanders, Captains Barry, Hallock, and Johnston; had fought two severe battles with vessels of war; was twice taken, and once recaptured, besides having several times engaged armed ships, and made many prizes. The English commander received a good deal of credit for the persevering gallantry with which he lay by, and captured his opponent.

The fate of the *Reprisal*, a vessel that had even been more successful than her consort, was still harder. This ship also sailed for America, agreeably to the conditions made with the French government, and foundered on the banks of Newfoundland, all on board perishing with the exception of the cook. In Captain Wickes the country lost a gallant, prudent, and efficient officer, and one who promised to have risen high in his profession had his life been spared.

To the untimely loss of the *Reprisal*, and the unfortunate capture of the *Lexington*, must be attributed the little eclat that attended the services of these two vessels in Europe. They not only preceded all the other national cruisers in the European seas, but they did great positive injury to the commerce of the enemy, besides exciting such a feeling of insecurity in the English merchants, as to derange their plans, and to produce other revolutions in the course of trade, that will be adverted to in the close of the chapter.

In order to complete the account of the proceedings of the American commissioners at Paris, so far as they were connected with naval movements, during the years 1776 and 1777, it is necessary to come next to the affair of Captain Conyngham, which, owing to some marked circumstances, made more noise than the cruises of the *Reprisal* and *Lexington*, though the first exploits of the latter were anterior as to time, and of not less consequence in their effects.

While the commissioners* were directing the movements of Captain Wickes, in the manner that has been mentioned, they were not idle in other quarters. A small frigate was building at Nantes, on their account, and there will be occasion hereafter to speak of her services and loss, under the name of the *Queen of France*. Some time in the spring of 1777, an agent was sent to Dover by the American commissioners where he purchased a fine fast-sailing English-built cutter, and had her carried across to Dunkirk. Here she was privately equipped as a cruiser, and named the *Surprise*. To the command of this vessel, Captain Gustavus Conyngham was appointed, by filling up a blank commission from John Hancock, the President of Congress. This commission bore date March 1st, 1777, and it would seem, as fully entitled Mr. Conyngham to the rank of a captain in the navy, as any other that was ever issued by the same authority. Having obtained his officers and crew in Dunkirk, Captain Conyngham sailed on a cruise, about the 1st of May, and on the 4th, he took a brig called the *Joseph*. On the 7th, when within

* Dr. Franklin and Silas Deane.

a few leagues of the coast of Holland, the *Surprise* ran along side of the *Harwich* packet the *Prince of Orange*, which she boarded and took with so little previous alarm, that Captain Conyngham on stepping upon the deck of the prize, walked coolly down into her cabin, where he found her master and his passengers at breakfast. The mail for the north of Europe being on board the *Prince of Orange*, Captain Conyngham believed his acquisition to be of sufficient importance to return to port, and accordingly he reappeared at Dunkirk in a day or two.

By referring to the dates, it will be seen, though both the *Reprisal* and the *Lexington*, especially the first, had cruised in the European seas prior to the sailing of the *Surprise*, that the latter vessel performed the exploit just mentioned, shortly before Captain Wickes sailed on his cruise in the Irish and English Channels. Coming as it did so soon after the capture of the *Lisbon* packet, and occurring on one of the great thoroughfares between England and the continent, coupled with the fact that the cutter had been altogether equipped in a French port, the loss of the *Prince of Orange* appears to have attracted more attention than the transactions before described. The remonstrances of the English ambassador were so earnest, that Captain Conyngham and his crew were imprisoned, the cutter was seized, and the prizes were liberated. On this occasion the commission of Captain Conyngham was taken from him, and sent to Versailles, and it seems never to have been returned.

So completely was the English government deceived by this demonstration of an intention on the part of the French ministry to cause the treaty to be respected, that two sloops of war were actually sent to Dunkirk to carry Captain Conyngham and his people to England, that they might be tried as pirates. When the ships reached Dunkirk, as will be seen in the succeeding events, the birds had flown.

The commissioners had the capture of some of the transports with Hessian troops on board in view, and they were no sooner notified of the seizure of the *Surprise*, than Mr. Hodge, an agent who was of great service to the cause, was directed to procure another cutter. One was accordingly purchased at Dunkirk, and was fitted, with all despatch, for a cruiser. Means were found to liberate Captain Conyngham and his people, and this second vessel, which was called the *Revenge*, sailed from Dunkirk on the 18th of July, or about the time that Captain Wickes returned from his cruise with the three other vessels. A new commission had been obtained for Captain Conyngham, previously to putting to sea, which bore date May 2d, 1777. As this second commission was dated anterior to the seizure of the old one, there is no question that it was also one of those in blank, which had been confided to the commissioners to fill at their discretion.

The *Revenge* proved exceedingly successful, making prizes daily and generally destroying them. Some of the most valuable, however, were ordered into Spain, where many arrived; their avails proving of great moment to the agents of the American government

in Europe. It is even affirmed that the money advanced to Mr. Adams for travelling expenses, when he landed in Spain from the French frigate *La Sensible*, a year or two later, was derived from this source.

Having suffered from a gale, Captain Conyngham disguised the *Revenge*, and took her into one of the small English ports, where he actually refitted without detection. Shortly after, he obtained supplies in Ireland, paying for them by bills on his agents in Spain. In short, after a cruise of almost unprecedented success, so far as injury to the English merchants was concerned, the *Revenge* went into Ferrol, refitted, and finally sailed for the American seas, where it would derange the order of events to follow her at this moment.

The characters of the *Surprise* and *Revenge* appear never to have been properly understood. In all the accounts of the day, and in nearly, if not in quite all the subsequent histories, these vessels are spoken of as privateers, authorised to act by the commissioners at Paris. It is not clear that the commissioners sent private armed vessels to sea at all, though the act may have come within the scope of their powers. That the two cutters commanded by Captain Conyngham were public vessels, however, is proved in a variety of ways. Like the *Dolphin* 10, Lieutenant Nicholson, an officer who may be said to have almost passed his life in the navy, the *Surprise* and *Revenge* were bought and equipped by agents of the diplomatic commissioners of the United States, on public account, and the commissions granted to Captain Conyngham were gifts of personal authority, and not powers conceded to particular vessels. It is known that Dr. Franklin, at a later day, and with an especial object in view, granted temporary commissions in the navy, but there is no evidence that either of those bestowed on Captain Conyngham possessed even this conditional character. The *Revenge* was finally given up to the Navy Board, in Philadelphia, and was sold on public account. It is certainly competent for a government to consider its public vessels as it may see fit, or to put them in the several classes of vessels of war, revenue cruisers, packets, troop-ships, transports, or any thing else, but it would, at least, be a novelty for it to deem any of its own active cruisers privateers. The very word would infer a contradiction in terms. Paul Jones speaks of his desire to obtain Captain Conyngham as a member of a court martial, as late as 1779, and in a remonstrance against the treatment shown to Captain Conyngham, then a prisoner of war, made by Congress, through its Secretary, Charles Thompson, of the date of July 1779, that officer is termed, "Gustavus Conyngham, a citizen of America, late commander of an armed vessel in the service of said States, and taken on board a private armed cutter," &c. &c. Here the distinction between public and private armed vessels is unequivocally made, and the fact that Captain Conyngham had served in both, is as clearly established; it being admitted that he was acting in a privateer at the precise moment of his capture. The latter circumstance, in no degree affected the rank of Captain Conyngham, officers of the navy quite frequently serving in private armed ships, after the first two or three

years of the war, in consequence of there not having been public vessels to afford them employment. That there was some irregularity in giving Captain Conyngham two commissions for the same rank, and bearing different dates, is true, but this arose from necessity; and want of regularity and system was a fault of the times, rather than of those who conducted the affairs of the American marine, during the Revolution. There can be no reasonable doubt that both the *Surprise* and the *Revenge* were public vessels of war, and that Gustavus Conyngham was a captain in the navy of the United States of America, in virtue of two commissions granted by a competent authority; and that, too, subsequently to the Declaration of Independence, or after the country claimed all the political rights of sovereign power.

The sensation produced among the British merchants, by the different cruises in the European seas, that have been recorded in this chapter, is stated in the diplomatic correspondence of the day, to have been greater than that produced, in the previous war, by the squadron of the celebrated *Thurot*. Insurance rose to an enormous height, and, in speaking of the cruise of Captain Wickes in particular, Mr. Deane observes in one of his letters to Robert Morris, that it "effectually alarmed England, prevented the great fair at Chester, occasioned insurance to rise, and even deterred the English merchants from shipping goods in English bottoms, at any rate, so that in a few weeks, *forty sail of French ships* were loading in the Thames on freight; an instance never before known." In the same letter, this commissioner adds,—“In a word, Cunningham (Conyngham) by his first and second bold expeditions, is become the terror of all the eastern coast of England and Scotland, and is more dreaded than *Thurot* was, in the late war.”

Insurance, in some instances, rose as high as twenty-five per cent., and it is even affirmed that there was a short period when ten per cent. was asked between Dover and Calais, a distance of only seven leagues.

Having now related the principal maritime events that were connected with the policy and measures of the commissioners in France, during the years 1776 and 1777, we shall return to the American seas, and resume the thread of the narrative, where it has been interrupted, or towards the middle of the former year. We shall shortly have occasion, however, to revert to the subject that we are now temporarily quitting, this quarter of the world having been the theatre of still more interesting incidents connected with the navy, at a later day. Before returning to the year 1776, and the more chronological order of events, however, one fact may well be recorded here. With a view to increase the naval force of the country, the commissioners had caused a frigate of extraordinary size, and of peculiar armament and construction for that period, to be laid down at Amsterdam. This ship had the keel and sides of a two decker, though frigate built, and her main deck armament was intended to consist of thirty-two pounders. Her name was the *Indien*. But in consequence of the apprehensions of the Dutch government, and the

jealousy of that of England, Congress was induced, about this time, to make an offering of the *Indien* to Louis XVI., and she was equipped and got ready for sea, as a French vessel of war. In the end, the manner in which this frigate was brought into the service of one of the new American States, and her fate, will be shown.

CHAPTER VI.

Commodore Sir Peter Parker attacks Charleston—Is repulsed by the Americans—Capt. Mugford captures the *Hope*—The *Sachem*, Capt. Robinson, captures an English letter of marque—Capt. R. put in command of the *Doria*—Captures the *Racehorse*, after a sharp contest—Conflict of American galleys with the enemy—Capt. Hudson of the *Ranger* captures a British brig, after an action of two hours—Battle on Lake Champlain—General Arnold—American privateers.

It is now necessary to revert to events that will require the time to be carried back more than a twelvemonth. In reviewing this branch of the subject, it may be well to take a brief notice of the state of the regular marine of the country, in the spring of the year 1776, or soon after the law for capturing all British vessels had passed, and at a moment when the independence of the country was seriously contemplated, though not formally declared.

None of these vessels ordered to be built, by the laws of the previous year, were yet launched, and every public cruiser of any size that was actually afloat had been bought into the service. Of these, the largest were little suited to war, as they were necessarily selected from among the merchant vessels of the country, while the smaller had been chosen principally from among the privateers. Copper, for ships, was just coming into use, and it is not believed that a single cruiser of the United States possessed the great advantage of having this material on its bottom until a much later day.

Philadelphia being the seat of government, the largest town in the country, and naturally strong in its defences, more than usual attention was paid to the means of preventing the enemy from getting possession of it by water. Thirteen galleys had been provided for this purpose, as well as a heavy floating battery, and several fire rafts. An officer of the name of Hazlewood was put in command, with the title of commodore, his commission having been issued by the Colony of Pennsylvania. Similar arrangements were made in the Chesapeake, where a gentleman of the name of Barron, the father of two officers who have subsequently risen to high rank in the service, received the same commission from the Colony of Virginia. James Nicholson, who so shortly after became the senior captain of the navy, filled a corresponding station in the Colony of Maryland, and performed some service that did him credit.

Most of the colonies had their respective cruisers at sea, or on their own coasts, while the ocean literally began to swarm with pri

vateers from all parts of the country ; though New England took the lead in this species of warfare. Robert Morris, in one of his official letters of a date later than this precise time, remarks that the passion for privateering was so strong in this particular part of the country, that even agriculture was abandoned in order to pursue it.

The English evacuated Boston on the 17th of March of this year, retiring to Halifax with their fleet and army. From this place, they directed their movements for a short period, or until they were enabled, by the arrival of powerful reinforcements, to choose the points which it was believed would be the most advantageous to possess for the future management of the war. Charleston, South Carolina, was soon selected for this purpose, and preparations for a descent on that coast were made as early as April, or immediately after the evacuation of Boston. It is not improbable that this step was held in view, when the British quitted New England, as the occupation of that town would enable the English government to overrun all the southern colonies. Luckily, some despatches, that were intercepted by Commodore Barron, of the Virginia service, betrayed this design to the people of Charleston, who were not slow in making their preparations to meet the enemy.

In furtherance of this plan, which is even said to have emanated from the British ministry itself, though some ascribe the attack that occurred to the officers immediately in command, the main object being a secure footing in the southern States at any eligible point that might offer, a squadron consisting of several sail, under the orders of Commodore Sir Peter Parker, arrived on the coast of North Carolina as early as May. Here it was joined by a fleet of transports from Halifax, having on board nearly three thousand troops, at the head of whom was Lieutenant General, afterwards Sir Henry, Clinton.

On the 4th of June this imposing force appeared off Charleston Bar, and made immediate preparations for a descent and an attack by sea ; buoying out the channel for the latter purpose without delay. A portion of the troops were landed on Long Island, which is separated from Sullivan's Island by a narrow channel that is fordable in certain states of the tide, with a view to pass over and take a strong work, made of palmetto logs, that the Americans had erected for the defence of their harbour, and which it was thought might easily be reduced from the rear. Happily for the Americans, a long continuance of easterly winds drove the water up into the passage between the two islands, converting the channel into a ditch, that effectually prevented the forces of General Clinton from crossing. On the 7th, the frigates passed the bar ; and on the 10th, a fifty gun ship succeeded with great difficulty, in accomplishing the same object. The delay occasioned by the want of water, and the indecision of the English general, who acted with less vigour than his associate in command, was eagerly improved by the Americans, and a considerable force collected in and about the town, though the fort on Sullivan's Island, which was subsequently named after its gallant commander, Colonel Moultrie, did not admit of much enlargement or additional

fortifying. This work contained twenty-six guns, twenty-six and eighteen pounders, and it was garrisoned by about four hundred men, of whom more than three hundred were regulars. Other troops were at hand to watch the party on Long Island, and to resist any attempt to land. Major General Lee, of the United States' service commanded in chief, on the side of the Americans. Suitable preparations were made to save the garrison, in the event of a descent, though it appears to have been the opinion of Colonel Moultrie, that he could have maintained the island even had the enemy crossed and landed.

On the 28th of June, Sir Peter Parker, being joined by another fifty, and having completed his preparations, moved his ships to their respective stations, in order to commence the attack. Between ten and eleven in the forenoon, the *Thunder* began to throw shells at the fort, to cover the approach of the other vessels, though without much effect. The shells were well directed, and many fell in the centre of the fort; but they were received in a morass, where the fuses were extinguished. But few exploded. The *Bristol 50*, Sir Peter Parker's own ship, the *Experiment 50*, which had joined but a day or two before, both vessels of two decks, the *Active 28*, and the *Solebay 28*, anchored in front of the fort, with springs on their cables; while the *Acteon 28*, *Siren 28*, and *Sphinx 20*, endeavored to get into positions between the island and the town, with a view to enfilade the works, to cut off the communications with the main body of the American forces, and to intercept a retreat. The latter vessels got entangled among the shoals, and all three took the ground. In the confusion, the *Sphinx* and *Siren* ran foul of each other, by which accident the former lost her bowsprit. The *Acteon* stuck so fast, that all the efforts of her crew to get her afloat proved unavailing; but the other two succeeded in getting off in a few hours. In consequence of these mistakes and accidents, the three vessels named were of little or no use to the British during the engagement.

Of the vessels that came up in front, the *Active 28*, led. As she drew near, the fort fired a few guns, as if to try the range of its shot, but the battle did not properly begin until the frigate had anchored and delivered her broadside. The other vessels followed, when they all commenced as severe and well supported a fire, as was probably ever kept up for so long a period, by ships of their force.

The cannonade began in earnest about twelve o'clock, and it was maintained throughout a long summer's afternoon, and, with short intervals, until nine o'clock at night, with undaunted resolution, on both sides. The fire of the ships was rapid: that of the fort deliberate, but of deadly aim. The first, owing to the peculiar nature of the wood of which the works were composed, did but little injury, while the heavy shot sent from the fort, passed through and through the sides of the enemy's ships. At one period, the garrison had nearly expended its ammunition, and its fire ceased for so long a time, that it became the impression of the enemy that it had evacu-

ted the works.* A fresh supply arriving, however, this error of the English was soon corrected, the fire that was renewed being, if possible, more destructive than that which had preceded the pause. In the heat of the engagement the springs of the Bristol's cable were cut, and the ship swung round, with her stern to the embrasures. That deadly deliberate fire, which had distinguished the garrison throughout the day, now told with awful effect on this devoted vessel. In this scene of slaughter and destruction, the old seaman who commanded the British squadron, displayed the high resolution which, during the last century, has distinguished so many other officers of his name in the same service. At one time, he is said to have stood almost alone on the quarter-deck of his ship, bleeding, but delivering his orders calmly and with discretion. By the application of a new spring, the vessel was extricated from this awful position, and her firing was renewed.

But no courage or perseverance on the part of the assailants could overcome the cool resolution of the garrison, and when night set in, Sir Peter Parker made the signal for the ships to retire. All the vessels effected their retreat but the *Acteon*, which ship remained too firmly grounded to be moved. From this frigate the enemy withdrew her people next morning, when they set her on fire, leaving her with her guns loaded and colours flying. She was immediately boarded by the Americans, who hauled down her ensign, fired a few shot at the retreating ships, and left her. In a short time her magazine exploded.

This was the most hotly contested engagement of the kind that ever took place on the American coast, and it goes fully to prove the important military position, that ships cannot withstand forts when the latter are properly constructed, armed, and garrisoned. General Moultrie, in his *Memoirs*, states that he commenced the battle with only twenty-eight rounds of powder. The supplies received during the fight amounted to but seven hundred pounds in gross, which, for guns of so heavy caliber, would scarcely make a total of thirty-five rounds. He is of opinion that the want of powder alone prevented the Americans from destroying the men of war.

On this occasion the Americans had only thirty-six killed and wounded, while the loss of the British was about two hundred men. The two fifty gun ships suffered most, the *Bristol* having the commodore himself, Captain Morris, who died of his injuries, and sixty-nine men wounded, besides forty killed. Among the former was Lord William Campbell, a brother of the Duke of Argyle, who had

* Some curious errors appear in Sir Peter Parker's report of this affair, arising out of the distance at which he was placed, and the confusion of a hot conflict. Among other things he says that large parties were driven out of the fort by the fire of the ships, and that they were replaced by reinforcements from the main land. He also says that a man was hanged on a tree, in the rear of the fort, by a party that was entering it. Nothing of the sort occurred. Colonel Moultrie explains the affair of the man in the tree, by saying that a shot took a soldier's coat and carried it into the branches of a tree, where it remained suspended during the rest of the day. So far from any confusion or disorder having existed in the fort, when General Lee visited the works, during the height of the action, the officers laid aside their pipes in order to receive him with proper respect. After the affair, twelve hundred shot were picked up in and about the fort, besides many shells.

recently been Governor of South Carolina, in which province he had married, and who had taken a command on the *Bristol's* lower gun deck, with a view to animate her men. The *Experiment* suffered little less than the *Bristol*, several of her ports having been knocked into one, and seventy-nine of her officers and crew were killed and wounded. Among the latter was her commander, Captain Scott. The frigates, attracting less of the attention of the garrison escaped with comparatively little loss. A short time after this signal discomfiture, the British temporarily abandoned their design on Charleston, carrying off the troops, which had been perfectly useless during the operations.

Quitting the south for the present, we will now return to the north, to mention a few of the lighter incidents that occurred at different points on the coast. Soon after the British left Boston, a Captain Mugford obtained the use of a small armed vessel belonging to government, called the *Franklin*, and getting to sea, he succeeded in capturing the *Hope*, a ship that had on board fifteen hundred barrels of powder, and a large quantity of intrenching tools, gun carriages, and other stores. This vessel was got into Boston, in sight of the British squadron. Attempting another cruise immediately afterwards, Captain Mugford lost his life in making a gallant and successful effort to repel some of the enemy's boats, which had endeavoured to carry the *Franklin* and a small privateer that was in company, by boarding.

On the 6th of July, or two days after the Declaration of Independence, the *Sachem 10*, Captain Robinson, sailed from the Delaware on a cruise. The *Sachem* was sloop rigged, and one of the lightest cruisers in the service. When a few days out she fell in with an English letter of marque, a *Jamaica-man*, and captured her, after a sharp contest. Both vessels are said to have suffered severely in this affair, and to have had an unusual number of their people killed and wounded. Captain Robinson was now compelled to return to refit, and arriving at Philadelphia with the prize, the Marine Committee rewarded him for his success by giving him the command of the *Andrea Doria 14*, then recently returned from her cruise to the eastward under Captain Biddle, which officer had been transferred to the *Randolph 32*.

The *Doria* sailed shortly after for St. Eustatia, to bring home some arms; and it is said that the first salute ever paid to the American flag, by a regular government, was fired in return for the salute of the *Doria*, when she went into that island. For this indiscretion the Dutch governor was subsequently displaced.

On her return passage, off the western end of Porto Rico, the *Doria* made an English vessel of war, bearing down upon her with a disposition to engage. On ranging up abeam, the enemy commenced the action by firing a broadside, which was immediately returned by the *Doria*. A very sharp contest of two hours followed, when the Englishman struck. The prize proved to be the *Racehorse 12*, Lieutenant Jones, who had been sent by his admiral to cruise expressly for his captors. Lieutenant Jones was mortally

wounded, and a very large proportion of the *Racehorse's* officers and crew were either killed or wounded. The *Doria* lost twelve men, including all the casualties. Captain Robinson and his prize got safely into Philadelphia, in due season. The *Doria* never went to sea again, being shortly after burned by the Americans to prevent her falling into the hands of the British fleet, when the evacuation of Fort Mifflin gave the enemy the command of the Delaware.

The galleys in the Delaware had a long and well contested struggle with the *Roebuck* 44, Captain Hammond, and the *Liverpool* 20, Captain Bellew, about the first of May of this year. The cannonade was handsomely conducted, and it resulted in driving the enemy from the river. During this affair the *Wasp* 8, Captain Alexander, was active and conspicuous, cutting out a tender of the English ships from under their guns.

A spirited attack was also made on the *Phoenix* 44, and *Rose* 24, in the Hudson, on the third of August, by six American galleys. The firing was heavy and well maintained for two hours, both sides suffering materially. On the part of the galleys, eighteen men were killed and wounded, and several guns were dismounted by shot. The loss of the enemy is not known, though both vessels were repeatedly hulled.

But by this time the whole coast was alive with adventures of such a nature, scarcely a week passing that did not give rise to some incident that would have interest for the reader, did the limits of our work permit us to enter into the details. Wherever an enemy's cruiser appeared, or attempted to land, skirmishes ensued; and in some of these little affairs as much personal gallantry and ingenuity were displayed as in many of the more important combats. The coast of New England generally, the Chesapeake, and the coast of the Carolinas, were the scenes of most of these minor exploits, which, like all the subordinate incidents of a great struggle, are gradually becoming lost in the more engrossing events of the war.

October 12th, of this year, an armed British brig, the name of which has been lost, fitted out by the government of the Island of Jamaica, made an attempt on a small convoy of American vessels, off Cape Nicola Mole, in the West Indies, then in charge of the privateer *Ranger* 18, Captain Hudson. Perceiving the aim of the enemy, Captain Hudson ran under her stern, and gave her a severe raking fire. The action thus commenced, lasted nearly two hours, when the *Ranger* boarded, and carried the brig, hand to hand. The English vessel, in this affair, reported thirteen men killed and wounded, by the raking broadside of the *Ranger* alone. In the whole, she had between thirty and forty of her people injured. On her return from this cruise, the *Ranger* was purchased for the navy.

While these events were occurring on the ocean, naval armaments, and naval battles, took place on those lakes, that witnessed the evolutions of squadrons of force in the subsequent war between the two countries.

In order to command the Lakes Champlain and George, across which lay the ancient and direct communication with the Canadas,

flotillas had been constructed on both these waters, by the Americans. To resist this force, and with a view to co-operate with the movements of their troops, the British commenced the construction of vessels at St. Johns. Several men-of-war were laid up, in the St. Lawrence, and their officers and crews were transferred to the ship-ping built on Lake Champlain.

The American force, in the month of August, appears to have consisted of the following vessels, viz :

Schooner,	Royal Savage,	12,	Wynkoop.
Do.	Enterprise,	12,	Dixon.
Do.	Revenge,	10,	Laman.
Do.	Liberty,	10,	Plumer.
Gondola,		3,	Simmons.
Do.		3,	Mansfield.
Do.		3,	Sumner.
Do.		3,	Ustens.

To this force were added several more gondolas, and a few row galleys. These vessels were hastily equipped, and in most of the instances, it is believed, that they were commanded by officers in the army. Their crews were principally soldiers. At a later day, the American force was materially changed, new names were given and new vessels substituted, but so much confusion exists in the accounts as to render any formal attempt at accuracy in enumerating the craft, difficult, if not impossible.

On the other hand, the British constructed a force that enabled them to take the lake in October, with the following vessels, viz :

Ship,	Inflexible,	16,	Lieutenant Schank.
Schooner,	Maria,	14,	" Starke.
Do.	Carleton,	12,	" Dacres.
Radeau,	Thunderer,	14,	" Scott.
Gondola,	Royal Convert,	6,	" Lancroft.

To these were added twenty gun-boats, four long-boats, each armed with a gun, and twenty-four other craft, loaded with stores and provisions. The metal of this flotilla was much superior to that of the American force, the Inflexible carrying twelve pounders, the schooners sixes, the radeau twenty-fours and twelves, and the gun-boats, pieces that varied from eighteens down to nines. The British accounts admit that 796 officers and men were drafted from the Isis, Blonde, Triton, Garland, &c., in order to man these vessels, and artillerists and other troops were also put on board to aid in fighting them.

October 11th, General Arnold, who commanded the American flotilla, was lying off Cumberland Head, when at eight in the morning, the enemy appeared in force, to the northward, turning to windward with a view to engage. On that day the American vessels present consisted of the Royal Savage, 12, Revenge, 10, Liberty, 10, Lee, cutter, 4, Congress, galley, 10, Washington, do., 10, Trumbull, do., 10, and eight gondolas. Besides the changes that had been made since August, two or three of the vessels that were on the lake

were absent on their duty. The best accounts state the force of this flotilla, or of the vessels present, as follows, viz :

Guns, 90.

Metal, 647 lbs.

Men, 600, including soldiers.

On this occasion, the British brought up nearly their whole force, as it has been already stated, although having the disadvantage of being to leeward, all their vessels could not get into close action. Captain Douglas, of the *Isis*, had commanded the naval movements that preceded the battles, and Lieutenant General Sir Guy Carleton, was present, in person, on board the *Maria*. The first officer, in his official report of the events, mentions that the *Inflexible* was ready to sail, within twenty-eight days after her keel had been laid, and that he had caused to be equipped, between July and October, "thirty fighting vessels of different sorts and sizes, and all carrying cannon." Captain Pringle, of the *Lord Howe*, was the officer actually in charge, however, of the British naval force on the lake, and he commanded in person in the different encounters.

The action of the 11th of October commenced at eleven, in the forenoon, and by half-past twelve it was warm. On the part of the British, the battle for a long time was principally carried on by the gun boats, which were enabled to sweep up to windward, and which, by their weight of metal, were very efficient in smooth water. The *Carleton*, 12, Lieutenant Dacres, was much distinguished in this day, being the only vessel of size, that could get into close fight. After maintaining a hot fire for several hours, Captain Pringle judiciously called off the vessels that were engaged, anchoring just out of gun-shot, with an intention to renew the attack in the morning. In this affair the Americans, who had discovered great steadiness throughout the day, had about 60 killed and wounded, while the British acknowledged a loss of only 40. The *Carleton*, however, suffered considerably.

Satisfied that it would be impossible, successfully, to resist so great a superiority of force, General Arnold got under way, at 2 P. M., on the 12th, with the wind fresh ahead. The enemy made sail in chase, as soon as his departure was discovered, but neither flotilla could make much progress on account of the gondolas, which were unable to turn to windward. In the evening the wind moderated, when the Americans gained materially on their pursuers. Another change occurred, however, and a singular variation in the currents of air, now favoured the enemy ; for while the Americans, in the narrow part of the lake, were contending with a fresh southerly breeze, the English got the wind at northeast, which brought their leading vessels within gun-shot at 12, meridian, on the 13th.

On this occasion Captain Pringle, in the *Maria*, led in person, closely supported by the *Inflexible* and *Carleton*. The Americans were much scattered, several of the gondolas having been sunk and abandoned, on account of the impossibility of bringing them off. General Arnold, in the Congress galley, covered the rear of his retreating flotilla, having the *Washington* galley, on board of which

was Brigadier General Waterbury, in company. The latter had been much shattered in the fight, of the 11th, and after receiving a few broadsides, she was compelled to strike. General Arnold, now defended himself like a lion, in the Congress, occupying the three vessels of the enemy so long a time, as to enable six of his little fleet to escape. When further resistance was out of the question, he ran the Congress on shore, set fire to her, and she blew up with her colours flying.

Although the result of this action was so disastrous, the American arms gained much credit, by the obstinacy of the resistance. General Arnold, in particular, covered himself with glory, and his example appears to have been nobly followed by most of his officers and men. Even the enemy did justice to the resolution and skill with which the American flotilla was managed, the disparity in the force rendering victory out of the question from the first. The manner in which the Congress was fought until she had covered the retreat of the galleys, and the stubborn resolution with which she was defended until destroyed, converted the disasters of this part of the day, into a species of triumph.

In these affairs, the Americans lost eleven vessels, principally gondolas, while on the part of the British, two gondolas were sunk, and one blown up. The loss of men was supposed to be about equal, no less than sixty of the enemy perishing in the gondola that blew up. This statement differs from the published official accounts of the English, but those reports, besides being meagre and general, are contradicted by too much testimony on the other side, to command our respect.

There has been occasion, already, to mention Mr. John Manly, who, in command of the schooner *Lee*, made the first captures that occurred in the war. The activity and resolution of this officer, rendered his name conspicuous at the commencement of the struggle, and it followed as a natural consequence, that, when Congress regulated the rank of the captains, in 1776, he appears as one of them, his appointment having been made as early as April the 17th, of this year. So highly, indeed, were his services then appreciated, that the name of Captain Manly stands second on the list, and he was appointed to the command of the *Hancock* 32. When Captain Manly was taken into the navy, the *Lee* was given to Captain Waters, and was present at the capture of the three transports off Boston, as has been already stated. This little schooner, the name of which will ever remain associated with American history, in consequence of her all important captures in 1775, appears to have continued actively employed, as an in-shore cruiser, throughout this year, if not later, in the pay of the new state of Massachusetts. Captain Waters, like his predecessor, Captain Manly, was received into the navy, on the recommendation of Washington, a commission to that effect having been granted by Congress, March 18th, 1777.

Much enterprise and gallantry were exhibited in the encounters between the American privateers and heavily armed merchant-ships of the enemy, at this period, and England appears to have been so

completely taken by surprise, that they were of almost daily occurrence. The different colonies, also, fitted out more cruisers, principally vessels purchased for that purpose, and some of them were commanded by officers who also bore commissions in the service of Congress, or of the United States of America, as the confederation was called after the Declaration of Independence. South Carolina, on the 16th February, 1776, had three of these vessels; a ship of 26 nine pounders; a brig of 18 sixes; and a schooner of 12 sixes. One of these cruisers drove a sloop of war from her convoy, and captured four transports loaded with stores. Massachusetts was never without several cruisers, and Pennsylvania, from time to time, had more or less. Virginia had her little marine, too, as has been already mentioned, though its attention was principally directed to the defence of her numerous rivers and bays.

Some of the English accounts of this period state that near a hundred privateers had been fitted out of New England alone, in the two first years of the war, and the number of seamen in the service of the crown, employed against the new States of America, was computed at 26,000.

The colonies obtained many important supplies, colonial as well as military, and even manufactured articles of ordinary use, by means of their captures; scarce a day passing that vessels of greater or less value did not arrive in some one of the ports of their extensive coast. By a list published in the Remembrancer, an English work of credit, it appears that 342 sail of English vessels had been taken by American cruisers in 1776; of which number 44 were recaptured, 18 released, and 4 burned.

On the other hand, the Americans met with their disasters; many privateers being taken, principally by the fast-sailing frigates of the enemy, while valuable merchantmen fell into their hands, from time to time. In short, in a commercial sense, the war became very destructive to both parties, though it was best supported by the colonists, the rise in colonial produce, in a measure, compensating them for their losses.

CHAPTER VII.

Successful cruise of the Randolph.....British account of the action, in which she blew upLoss of the Cabot... The Trumbull captures two English transports.....The Hancock, Capt. Manly, captures the Fox, which is afterwards recaptured off Halifax..... Capt. M. surrenders his ship to the British.....Capt. McNiel censured and dismissed the service.....Vessels destroyed in the Delaware by the English.....The Augusta blown up.....Cruise of the Raleigh, and her action with the Druid.

THE year 1777 opened with new prospects for the American cause. The hardy movements of Washington in New Jersey had restored the drooping confidence of the nation, and great efforts were

made to follow up the advantage that had been so gloriously obtained. Most of the vessels authorised by the laws of 1775, had been built and equipped during the year 1776, and America may now be said, for the first time, to have something like a regular navy, although the service was still, and indeed continued to be throughout the war, deficient in organisation, system, and unity. After the first effort, connected with its creation, the business of repairing losses, of increasing the force, and of perfecting that which had been so hastily commenced, however, was either totally neglected, or carried on in a manner so desultory and inefficient, as soon to leave very little of method or order in the marine. As a consequence, officers were constantly compelled to seek employment in private armed ships, or to remain idle, and the discipline did not advance, as would otherwise have been the case during the heat of an active war. To the necessities of the nation, however, and not to its foresight and prudence, must be attributed this state of things, the means of raising and maintaining troops being obtained with difficulty, and the cost of many ships entirely exceeding its resources. It is probable that had not the public armed vessels been found useful in conveying, as well as in convoying the produce, by means of which the loans obtained in Europe were met, and perhaps indispensable in keeping up the diplomatic communications with that quarter of the world, the navy would have been suffered to become extinct, beyond its employment in the bays and rivers of the country. This, however, is anticipating events, for at the precise moment in the incidents of the war at which we have now arrived, the exertions of the republic were perhaps at their height, as respects its naval armaments.

One of the first, if not the very first of the new vessels that got to sea, was the *Randolph* 32. It has been seen that Captain Biddle was appointed to this ship, on his return from his successful cruise in the *Andrea Doria* 14. The *Randolph* was launched at Philadelphia in the course of the season of 1776, and sailed on her first cruise early in 1777. Discovering a defect in her masts, as well as a disposition to mutiny in his people, too many of whom were volunteers from among the prisoners, Captain Biddle put into Charleston for repairs. As soon as the ship was refitted, he sailed again, and three days out, he fell in with and captured four Jamaica-men, one of which, the *True Briton*, had an armament of 20 guns. The *Randolph* returned to Charleston, with her prizes, in safety. Here she appears to have been blockaded, by a superior English force, during the remainder of the season. The state authorities of South Carolina were so much pleased with the zeal and deportment of Captain Biddle, and so much elated with their own success against Sir Peter Parker, that they now added four small vessels of war of their own, the *General Moultrie* 18, the *Polly* 16, the *Notre Dame* 16, and the *Fair American* 14, to his command. With these vessels in company, and under his orders, Captain Biddle sailed, early in 1778, in quest of the British ships, the *Carrysfort* 32, the *Perseus* 20, the *Hinchinbrook* 16, and a privateer, which had been cruising off Charleston for some time. The American squadron, however, had

been detained so long by foul winds, that, when it got into the offing, no traces of the enemy were to be discovered. For the further history of the *Randolph*, we are unhappily indebted to the British accounts.

By a letter from Captain Vincent, of his Britannic Majesty's ship *Yarmouth*, 64, dated March 17th 1778, we learn that, on the 7th of that month, while cruising to the eastward of Barbadoes, he made six sail to the southwest, standing on a wind. The *Yarmouth* bore down on the chases, which proved to be two ships, three brigs, and a schooner. About nine o'clock in the evening she succeeded in ranging up on the weather quarter of the largest and leading vessel of the strangers; the ship next in size, being a little astern and to leeward. Hoisting her own colours, the *Yarmouth* ordered the ship near her to show her ensign, when the American flag was run up, and the enemy poured in a broadside. A smart action now commenced, and was maintained with vigour for twenty minutes, when the stranger blew up. The two ships were so near each other at the time, that many fragments of the wreck struck the *Yarmouth*, and among other things, an American ensign, rolled up, was blown in upon her forecastle. This flag was not even singed. The vessels in company now steered different ways, and the *Yarmouth* gave chase to two, varying her own course for that purpose. But her sails had suffered so much in the engagement, that the vessels chased soon run her out of sight. In this short action the *Yarmouth*, by the report of her own commander, had five men killed and twelve wounded. On the 12th, while cruising near the same place, a piece of wreck was discovered, with four men on it, who were making signals for relief. These men were saved, and when they got on board the *Yarmouth*, they reported themselves as having belonged to the United States ship *Randolph* 32, Captain Biddle, the vessel that had blown up in action with the English ship on the night of the 7th of the same month. They had been floating ever since on the piece of wreck, without any other sustenance than a little rain water. They stated that they were a month out of Charleston.

We regard with admiration the steadiness and spirit with which according to the account of his enemy, Captain Biddle commenced this action, against a force so vastly his superior; and, although victory was almost hopeless, even had all his vessels behaved equally well with his own ship, we find it difficult, under the circumstances, to suppose that this gallant seaman did not actually contemplate carrying his powerful antagonist, most probably by boarding.*

* Nicholas Biddle was descended from one of those respectable families that first peopled West Jersey, in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. He was the sixth son of William Biddle, of that colony, who had removed to the city of Philadelphia previously to his birth, and where this child was born, in 1750. Young Biddle went to sea at thirteen, and from that early age appears to have devoted himself to the calling with ardour and perseverance. After several voyages, and suffering much in the way of shipwreck, he went to England, and by means of letters, was rated as a midshipman on board of a British sloop of war, commanded by Captain, afterwards Admiral, Sterling. It is a singular fact in the life of this remarkable young man, that he subsequently entered on board one of the vessels sent towards the North Pole, under the Hon. Captain Phipps, where he found Nelson a volunteer like himself. Both were made cockswains by the commodore. This was in 1775, and the difficulties with the American colonies

In March, 1777, the United States brig Cabot, Captain Olney, was chased ashore, on the coast of Nova Scotia by the British frigate Milford, which pressed the Cabot so hard that there was barely time to get the people out of the brig. Captain Olney and his crew retreated into the woods, and subsequently they made their escape by seizing a schooner, in which they safely arrived at home. The enemy, after a long trial, got the Cabot off, and she was taken into the British navy.

Shortly after this loss, or on the 9th of April, the Trumbull 28, Captain Saltonstall, fell in with, off New York, and captured after a smart action, two armed transports, with stores of value on board. In this affair the enemy suffered severely in casualties, and the Trumbull herself had 7 men killed and 8 wounded.

In May of this year, the Hancock 32, Capt. John Manly, and the Boston 24, Capt. Hector McNiell, sailed in company from Boston, on a cruise to the eastward. A few days out, or in the month of May, the Hancock made a strange sail, early in the morning, and succeeded in getting near enough to her to exchange broadsides, on opposite tacks; the Hancock using her starboard and the enemy his larboard guns. At this time, the Boston was out of gun-shot. Finding that he had to deal with an antagonist of superior force, the English vessel, which was a frigate, stood on, crowding sail to escape. The Hancock now went about, in pursuit, when Captain Manly sent his people from the guns, and ordered them to get their breakfasts. As the Hancock was one of the fastest ships that was ever built, she quickly drew up abeam of the chase, which renewed her fire as soon as her guns would bear. Captain Manly, however, commanded his men not to discharge a gun, until fairly alongside, when a warm and close action commenced, that lasted an hour and a half, when the Boston drawing near, the Englishman struck. The prize proved to be the Fox 28, Capt. ——. In this action the Hancock lost 8 men, and the Fox 32. The Boston did not fire a

were coming to a head. In 1775, Mr. Biddle returned home, prepared to share his country's fortunes, in weal or woe.

The first employment of Mr. Biddle, in the public service, was in command of a galley called the Camden, fitted out by the colony for the defence of the Delaware. From this station he was transferred to the service of Congress, or put into the regular marine, as it then existed, and given the command of the brig Andrea Doria, 14. In this vessel he does not appear to have had much share in the combat with the Glasgow, though present in the squadron, and in the expedition against New Providence. His successful cruise to the eastward, in the Doria, has been related in the body of the work, and on his return he was appointed to the Randolph, 32, the vessel in which he perished.

In the action with the Yarmouth, Captain Biddle was severely wounded in the thigh, and is said to have been seated in a chair, with the surgeon examining his hurt, when his ship blew up. His death occurred at the early age of twenty-seven, and he died unmarried, though engaged, at the time, to a lady in Charleston.

There is little question that Nicholas Biddle would have risen to high rank and great consideration, had his life been spared. Ardent, ambitious, fearless, intelligent, and persevering, he had all the qualities of a great naval captain, and, though possessing some local family influence perhaps, he rose to the station he filled at so early an age, by personal merit. For so short a career, scarcely any other had been so brilliant; for though no victories over regular cruisers accompanied his exertions, he had ever been successful until the fatal moment when he so gloriously fell. His loss was greatly regretted in the midst of the excitement and vicissitudes of a revolution, and can scarcely be appreciated by those who do not understand the influence that such a character can produce on a small and infant service.

gun until just after the Fox had struck, when she is said to have given her a broadside, the Hancock being in the act of lowering the boats to take possession, as her consort ranged up on the beam of the prize.

Captain Manly, now, put a crew on board the Fox, and continued his cruise, but was not fortunate enough to fall in with any thing of moment. On the 1st of June, the three ships appeared off Halifax, in company, looking into the harbour. This brought out the Rainbow, a 44 on two decks, Sir George Collier, the Flora 32, and the Victor 18, in chase. The Americans scattered, the Rainbow and Victor pressing the Hancock, the Flora the Fox, while the Boston had so much the start, as to be able easily to keep aloof. The Flora first closed with the Fox, which ship she recaptured after a short, but spirited action. The wind being very light, Captain Manly attempted to lighten his ship, by pumping out the water, and is believed to have hurt her sailing, by altering the trim. Finding the Rainbow was closing, that gallant officer made his dispositions for boarding, and doubtless, would have made a desperate effort to carry his powerful antagonist, had the wind permitted. The air remained so light, however, that the Rainbow got him fairly under her guns, before he could get near enough to accomplish the object. The Victor getting a raking position at the same time, the Hancock struck.

Captain McNiell was much censured for abandoning his consort on this occasion, and was dismissed the service, in consequence. As respects the Hancock, it is not probable the Boston could have done much service, the Rainbow alone having been superior to them both, but our accounts state that being about a league to windward of the Fox, when she was engaged, it was in the power of Captain McNiell to have rendered her essential assistance, and possibly to have prevented the recapture. No official accounts of the loss sustained, by either side, in this last affair, have been obtained.

The occupation of Philadelphia by the British army, this year, wrought a material change in the naval arrangements of the country. Up to this time, the Delaware had been a safe place of retreat for the different cruisers, and ships had been constructed on its banks in security and to advantage. The largest town in the United States, Philadelphia offered unusual facilities for such objects, and many public and private armed cruisers had been equipped at her wharves previously to the appearance of the British forces, under Sir William Howe. That important event completely altered the state of things, and the vessels that were in the stream at the time, were compelled to move higher up the river, or to get to sea in the best manner they could. Unfortunately, several of the ships constructed, or purchased, under the laws of 1775, were not in a situation to adopt the latter expedient, and they were carried to different places that were supposed to offer the greatest security.

As a part of the American vessels and galleys were above, and a part below the town, the very day after reaching the capital, the English commenced the erection of batteries to intercept the com-

munications between them. Aware of the consequences, the Delaware 24, Captain Alexander, and Andrea Doria 14, seconded by some other vessels, belonging to the navy, and to the State of Pennsylvania, moved in front of these works, and opened a cannonade, with a view to destroy them. The Delaware was so unfortunately placed, that when the tide fell, she took the ground, and her guns became unmanageable. Some field pieces were brought to bear on her, while in this helpless situation, and she necessarily struck. The other vessels were compelled to retire.

As the command of the river was now indispensable to the British, they turned their attention at once to the destruction of the American works below the town. An unsuccessful land attack was made by the Hessians, on Red Bank, and this was soon followed by another on Fort Mifflin, which, as it was intrusted to the shipping, comes more properly within our observation. With a view to effect the reduction or abandonment of Fort Mifflin, the British assembled a squadron of ships of a light draft of water, among which was the Augusta 64, which had been partially stripped, and fitted in some measure as a floating battery. As soon as the troops advanced against Red Bank, as stated, the ships began to move, but some chevaux de frise anchored in the river, had altered its channel, and the Augusta, and the Merlin sloop of war, got fast, in unfavorable positions. Some firing between the other vessels and the American works and galleys now took place, but was soon put a stop to by the approach of night. The next day the action was renewed with spirit, the Roebuck 44, Isis 32, Pearl 32, and Liverpool 28, being present, in addition to the Augusta and Merlin. Fire-ships were ineffectually employed by the Americans, but the cannonade became heavy. In the midst of the firing, it is said, that some pressed hay, which had been secured on the quarter of the Augusta, to render her shot-proof, took fire, and the ship was soon in flames. It now became necessary to withdraw the other vessels in order to escape the effects of the explosion, and the attack was abandoned. The Augusta blew up, and the Merlin having been set on fire by the British shared the same fate. A number of the crew of the Augusta were lost in that ship, the conflagration being so rapid as to prevent their removal. A second and better concerted attack, however, shortly after, compelled the Americans to evacuate the works, when the enemy got command of the river from the capes to the town. This state of things induced the Americans to destroy the few sea vessels that remained below Philadelphia, among which were the U. S. Brig Andrea Doria 14, and schooner Wasp 8, and it is believed the Hornet 10, though the galleys, by following the Jersey shore, were enabled to escape above.

While these important movements were occurring in the middle states, the Raleigh, a fine twelve-pounder frigate, that had been constructed in New Hampshire, under the law of 1775, was enabled to get to sea for the first time. She was commanded by Captain Thompson, the officer who appears as sixth on the list, and sailed in company with the Alfred 24, Captain Hinman. These two ships

went to sea, short of men, bound to France, where military stores were in waiting to be transported to America.

The *Raleigh* and *Alfred* had a good run off the coast, and they made several prizes of little value during the first few days of their passage. On the 2d of September they overtook and captured a snow, called the *Nancy*, which had been left by the outward bound Windward Island fleet, the previous day. Ascertaining from his prisoners the position of the West Indiamen, Captain Thompson made sail in chase. The fleet was under the charge of the *Camel*, *Druid*, *Weasel*, and *Grasshopper*, the first of which is said to have had an armament of twelve pounders. The following day, or September 3d, 1777, the *Raleigh* made the convoy from her mast heads, and by sunset was near enough to ascertain that there were sixty sail, as well as the positions of the men-of-war. Captain Thompson had got the signals of the fleet from his prize, and he now signalled the *Alfred*, as if belonging to the convoy. After dark he spoke his consort, and directed her commander to keep near him, it being his intention to run in among the enemy, and to lay the commodore aboard. At this time, the two American ships were to windward, but nearly astern.

In the course of the night the wind shifted to the northward, and the convoy hauled by the wind, bringing the American ships to leeward. At daylight the wind had freshened, and it became necessary to carry more sail than the *Alfred* (a tender-sided ship) could bear. Here occurred one of those instances of the unfortunate consequences which must always follow the employment of vessels of unequal qualities in the same squadron, or the employment of officers not trained in the same high school. The *Alfred* would not bear her canvass, and while the *Raleigh* fetched handsomely into the fleet, under double-reefed topsails, the former fell to leeward more than a league. Captain Thompson did not dare to shorten sail, lest his character might be suspected, and despairing of being supported by the *Alfred*, he stood boldly in among the British ships alone, and hove-to his ship in order to permit the merchantmen astern to draw more ahead of him.

When his plan was laid, Captain Thompson filled away, and stood directly through the convoy, luffing up towards the vessel of war that was most to windward. In doing this he spoke several of the merchantmen, giving them orders how to steer, as if belonging himself to the fleet, and repeating all the commodore's signals. Up to this moment the *Raleigh* appears to have escaped detection, nor had she had any signs of preparation about her, as her guns were housed, and her ports lowered.

Having obtained a weatherly position, the *Raleigh* now ran alongside of the vessel of war, and when within pistol-shot, she hauled up her courses, run out her guns, set her ensign, and commanded the enemy to strike. So completely was this vessel taken by surprise, that the order threw her into great confusion, and even her sails got aback. The *Raleigh* seized this favourable moment to pour in a broadside, which was feebly returned. The enemy were soon driven

from their guns, and the *Raleigh* fired twelve broadsides into the English ship in twenty minutes, scarcely receiving a shot in return. A heavy swell rendered the aim uncertain, but it was evident that the British vessel suffered severely, and this the more so, as she was of inferior force.

A squall had come on, and at first it shut in the two ships engaged. When it cleared away, the convoy was seen steering in all directions, in the utmost confusion, but the vessels of war, with several heavy well-armed West Indiamen, tacked and hauled up for the *Raleigh*, leaving no doubt of their intentions to engage. The frigate lay by her adversary until the other vessels were so near, that it became absolutely necessary to quit her, and then she ran to leeward and joined the *Alfred*. Here she shortened sail, and waited for the enemy to come down, but it being dark, the British commodore tacked and hauled in among his convoy again. The *Raleigh* and *Alfred* kept near this fleet for several days, but no provocation could induce the vessels of war to come out of it, and it was finally abandoned.

The ship engaged by the *Raleigh*, proved to be the *Druid* 20, Captain Carteret. She was much cut up, and the official report of her commander, made her loss six killed, and twenty-six wounded. Of the latter, five died soon after the action, and among the wounded was her commander. The *Druid* was unable to pursue the voyage, and returned to England.

In this affair, Captain Thompson discovered a proper spirit, for he might easily have cut out of the fleet half a dozen merchantmen, but he appears to have acted on the principle that vessels of war should first seek vessels of war. The *Raleigh* had three men killed and wounded in the engagement, but otherwise sustained little injury.

The commerce of England suffered a loss of 467 sail of merchantmen, during the year 1777, some of which were of great value, though the government kept a force of about seventy sail of men-of-war on the American coast alone. Many American privateers fell into their hands however, and a scarcity of men began to be felt, in consequence of the numbers that were detained in the English prisons. It was on the 14th of June of this year, that Congress finally established the stars and stripes as the flag of the nation.

During this year, Bushnel made several unsuccessful attempts to blow up the ships of the enemy by means of torpedoes, a species of warfare that it can hardly be regretted has so uniformly failed, since its tendency is to aggravate the evils of hostilities, without essentially conducing to bring them to a termination.

CHAPTER VIII.

Alliance with France.....New frigates.....Seizure of New Providence by Capt. Rathburne.....Capture of the Alfred.....Loss of the Virginia, Capt. Nicholson, on a bar in the Delaware.....American vessels destroyed on the Delaware.....John Paul Jones commands the Ranger.....attempt to capture the Drake.....to burn the colliers at Whitehaven.....to seize the Earl of Selkirk.....his conduct to Lady Selkirk.....action with, and capture of the Drake.....The Pigot cut out by Major Talbot.....The private armed ship Thorn. Capt. Waters, engages the Governor Tryon and the Sir William Erskine, and captures the latter.....Capture of the Sparlin.....Capt. John Barry, captures a British schooner and four transports.....his appointment to the Raleigh and action with the Experiment and Unicorn.....Loss of the Raleigh.

THE year 1778 opened with cheerful prospects for the great cause of American Independence ; the capture of Burgoyne, and the growing discontents in Europe, rendering a French alliance, and a European war, daily more probable. These events, in truth, soon after followed, and from that moment, the entire policy of the United States, as related to its marine, was changed. Previously to this great event, Congress had often turned its attention towards the necessity of building or purchasing vessels of force, in order to interrupt that absolute control which the enemy possessed, in the immediate waters of the country, and which even superseded the necessity of ordinary blockades, as two or three heavy frigates had been able, at any time, since the commencement of the struggle, to command the entrance of the different bays and sounds.

The French fleet, soon after the war between England and France broke out, appeared in the American seas, and, in a measure, relieved the country from a species of warfare that was particularly oppressive to a nation that was then so poor, and which possessed so great an extent of coast.

As the occupation of New York and Philadelphia prevented several of the new frigates from getting to sea at all, or occasioned their early loss, Congress had endeavoured to repair these deficiencies by causing other vessels to be built, or purchased, at points where they would be out of danger from any similar misfortunes. Among these ships were the Alliance 32, Confederacy 32, Deane 32, (afterwards called the Hague,) and Queen of France 28, all frigate-built, and the Ranger, Gates, and Saratoga sloops of war. To these were added a few other vessels, that were either bought, or borrowed in Europe, which will be mentioned in their proper places. The Alliance, which, as her name indicates, was launched about the time the treaty was made with France, was the favourite ship of the American navy, and it might be added of the American nation, during the war of the Revolution ; filling some such space in the public mind, as has since been occupied by her more celebrated successor, the Constitution. She was a beautiful and an exceedingly fast ship, but, as will be seen in the sequel, was rendered less efficient than she might otherwise have proved, by the mistake of placing her under the command of a French officer, with a view to pay a compliment to

the new allies of the republic. This unfortunate selection produced mutinies, much discontent among the officers, and, in the end, grave irregularities. The *Alliance* was built at Salisbury, in Massachusetts a place that figured as a building station, even in the seventeenth century.

The naval operations of the year open with a gallant little exploit, achieved by the United States sloop *Providence* 12, Captain Rathburne. This vessel carried only four pounders, and, at the time, is said to have had a crew of but fifty men on board. Notwithstanding this trifling force, Captain Rathburne made a descent on the Island of New Providence, at the head of twenty-five men. He was joined by a few American prisoners, less than thirty, it is said, and, while a privateer of sixteen guns, with a crew of near fifty men, lay in the harbour, he seized the forts, got possession of the stores, and effectually obtained command of the place. All the vessels in port, six in number, fell into his hands, and an attempt of the armed population to overpower him, was put down, by a menace to burn the town. A British sloop of war appeared off the harbour, while the Americans were in possession, but, ascertaining that an enemy was occupying the works, she retired, after having been fired on. The following day, the people assembled in such force, as seriously to threaten the safety of his party and vessel, and Captain Rathburne caused the guns of the fort to be spiked, removed all the ammunition and small arms, burned two of his prizes, and sailed with the remainder, without leaving a man behind him. In this daring little enterprise, the Americans held the place two entire days.

Captain John Barry, whose spirited action off the capes of Virginia, in the *Lexington* 14, has been mentioned, and whose capture of the *Edward*, on that occasion, is worthy of note, as having been the first of any vessel of war, that was ever made by a regular American cruiser in battle, was placed on the regulated list of October, 1776, as the seventh captain, and appointed to the command of the *Effingham* 28, then building at Philadelphia. The *Effingham* was one of the vessels that had been taken up the Delaware, to escape from the British army; and this gallant officer, wearied with a life of inactivity, planned an expedition down the stream, in the hope of striking a blow at some of the enemy's vessels anchored off, or below the town. Manning four boats, he pulled down with the tide. Some alarm was given when opposite the town, but dashing ahead, two of the barges got past without injury. Off Port Penn lay an enemy's schooner of ten guns, and thirty two men, and four transports, with freight for the British army. The schooner was boarded and carried, without loss, and the transports fell into the hands of the Americans also. Two cruisers appearing soon after in the river, however, Captain Barry destroyed his prizes, and escaped by land, without losing a man. On this occasion, the force actually present with Barry consisted of only twenty eight men.

Following the order of time, we now return to the movements of the two ships under the command of Captain Thompson, the *Raleigh* and the *Alfred*. After taking in military stores in France, these

vessels sailed for America, making a circuit to the southward, as was then quite usual with cruisers thus employed, in order to avoid the enemy's vessels of force, and to pick up a few prizes by the way. They sailed from l'Orient in February, 1778, and on the 9th of March, were chased by the British ships *Ariadne* and *Ceres*, which succeeded in getting alongside of the *Alfred*, and engaging her, while the *Raleigh* was at a distance. Believing a contest fruitless, after exchanging a few broadsides, the *Alfred* struck, but the *Raleigh*, though hard pressed, in the chase that succeeded, made her escape. Captain Thompson was blamed in the journals of the day, for not aiding his consort on this occasion; and he appears to have been superseded in the command of his ship, to await the result of a trial.

The British accounts state the force of the *Alfred*, at the time of her capture, at twenty nine-pounders, which will give us a more accurate idea of the real character of a vessel that filled so prominent a situation in the navy, at its formation. Twenty nine-pounders, would not probably raise her above the rate of an English twenty gun ship, even allowing her to have had a few sixes on her quarter-deck and fore-castle; and this, probably, was the true class of both the *Alfred* and *Columbus*, ships that figure as twenty-eights, and even as thirty-twos, in some of the earlier accounts of the war. But, it should always be remembered, that a disposition to exaggerate the power of the country, by magnifying the force of the ships, a practice peculiar to an infant and aspiring people, was a fault of the popular accounts of not only the Revolution, but of a still later period in the history of the United States.

Among the frigates ordered by the act of 1775, was one called the *Virginia* 28, which had been laid down in Maryland. To this vessel was assigned Captain James Nicholson, the senior captain on the list, an officer who had already discovered conduct and spirit in an affair with one of the enemy's tenders off Annapolis, while serving in the local marine of Maryland. The great embarrassments which attended most of the public measures of the day, and a vigilant blockade, prevented the *Virginia* from getting to sea, until the spring of this year, when having received her crew and equipments, she made the attempt on the 30th of March.

The frigate appears to have followed another vessel down the Chesapeake, under the impression that the best pilot of the bay was in charge of her. About three in the morning, however, she struck on the middle ground, over which she beat with the loss of her rudder. The ship was immediately anchored. Day discovered two English vessels of war at no great distance, when Captain Nicholson got ashore with his papers, and the ship was taken possession of by the enemy. An inquiry, instituted by Congress, acquitted Captain Nicholson of blame. The peculiarity of a commander's abandoning his vessel under such circumstances, gave rise to some comments at the time, but the result renders it probable that considerations of importance, that were not generally known, induced the step. A trial was not deemed necessary, and Captain Nicholson subsequently

fought two of the most remarkable combats of the war, though successful in neither.

But merit in warfare is not always to be measured by success, and least of all, in a profession that is liable to so many accidents and circumstances that lie beyond the control of man. An unexpected shift of wind, the sudden loss of an important spar, or the unfortunate injury occasioned by a single shot, may derange the best devised schemes, or enfeeble the best appointed ship; and it is in repairing these unexpected damages, in the steadiness, and order, and submission to authority, with which casualties are met, as well as in the greater effect of their attack, that the trained officers and men manifest their vast superiority over the hurried and confused movements of those who are wanting in these high qualities of discipline.

Leaving the ocean for a moment, we will now turn our attention to the proceedings of the enemy again, in the Delaware. Early in May, an expedition left Philadelphia, under the command of Major Maitland, and ascended that river with a view to destroy the American shipping, which had been carried up it to escape the invading and successful army of the enemy. The force consisted of the schooners *Viper* and *Pembroke*; the *Hussar*, *Cornwallis*, *Ferret*, and Philadelphia galleys; four gun-boats, and eighteen flat-boats, under the orders of Captain Henry of the navy. The 2d battalion of the light-infantry, and two field pieces composed the troops. Ascending the stream to a point above Bristol, the troops landed, under cover of the guns of the flotilla, without opposition. Indeed, there does not appear to have been any force to oppose the British on this occasion, or, if any, one of so little moment, as to put a serious contest out of the question. The *Washington* 32, and *Effingham* 28, both of which had been built at Philadelphia, but had never got to sea, were burned. These ships had not yet received their armaments. At this point several other vessels were destroyed, privateers and merchantmen, and the party proceeded to *Croswick Creek*, where the privateer *Sturdy Beggar* 18, and eight sail of other vessels were set on fire and consumed. The next day the British ascended to *Bile's Island*, and burned six more craft, four of which were pierced for guns. On descending by land to Bristol, a ship and a brig were destroyed. After this, four new ships, a new brig, and an old schooner were burned by the galleys, the party returning to Philadelphia that night, without losing a man. By this *coup de main*, the Americans lost two more of the frigates authorised by the law of 1775; and though it is not now easy to ascertain facts so minute, it is believed that two or three of the smallest of the cruisers that appear on the list of the navy, at its formation, were destroyed by the English on this occasion. The *Hornet*, *Sachem*, *Independence*, and *Musquito*, are not to be traced subsequently to this period, and if not burned when this expedition occurred, it is probable that they all were burnt with the *Wasp*, in 1777. To compensate for these losses, not a single frigate of the enemy had yet been brought into port, though the *Fox* 28, had been captured.

About this time the celebrated Paul Jones, whose conduct as a

lieutenant in the *Alfred*, and in the command of that ship, as well as in that of the *Providence* 12, had attracted much attention, appeared in the European seas in command of the *Ranger* 18. So cautious had the American government got to be, in consequence of the British remonstrances, that orders were given to the *Ranger* to conceal her armament while in France. This vessel, which is described as having been both crank and slow, was not thought worthy of so good an officer, by the Marine Committee, and he had been promised a better ship; but the exigencies of the service did not admit of the fulfilment of this engagement, and Captain Jones, after a long delay, had been induced to take this command, in preference to remaining idle. It is said, however, that he came to Europe in the hope of obtaining the *Indien*, but that vessel had been presented to the King of France previously to his arrival.

After going into Brest to refit, Captain Jones sailed from that port on the 10th of April, 1778, on a cruise in the Irish Channel. As the *Ranger* passed along the coast, she made several prizes, and getting as high as Whitehaven, Captain Jones determined, on the 17th, to make an attempt to burn the colliers that were crowded in that narrow port. The weather, however, prevented the execution of this project, and the ship proceeded as high as Glentine bay, on the coast of Scotland, where she chased a revenue vessel without success.

Quitting the Scottish coast, the *Ranger* next crossed to Ireland, and arriving off Carrickfergus, she was boarded by some fishermen. From these men Captain Jones ascertained that a ship which lay anchored in the roads, was the *Drake* sloop of war, Captain Burden, a vessel of a force about equal to that of the *Ranger*, and he immediately conceived a plan to run in and take her. Preparations were accordingly made to attempt the enterprise as soon as it was dark.

It blew fresh in the night, but when the proper hour had arrived, the *Ranger* stood for the roads, having accurately obtained the bearings of the enemy. The orders of Captain Jones were to overlay the cable of the *Drake*, and to bring up on her bows, where he intended to secure his own ship, and abide the result. By some mistake, the anchor was not let go in season, and instead of fetching up in the desired position, the *Ranger* could not be checked until she had drifted on the quarter of the *Drake*, at a distance of half a cable's length. Perceiving that his object was defeated, Captain Jones ordered the cable to be cut, when the ship drifted astern, and, making sail, she hauled by the wind as soon as possible. The gale increasing, it was with great difficulty that the *Ranger* weathered the land, and regained the channel.

Captain Jones now stood over to the English coast, and believing the time more favourable, he attempted to execute his former design on the shipping in the port of Whitehaven. Two parties landed in the night; the forts were seized and the guns were spiked; the few look-outs that were in the works being confined. In effecting this duty Captain Jones was foremost in person, for, having once sailed out of the port, he was familiar with the situation of the place. An accident common to both the parties into which the expedition had

been divided, came near defeating the enterprise in the outset. They had brought candles in lanterns, for the double purpose of lights and torches, and, now that they were about to be used as the latter, it was found that they were all consumed. As the day was appearing, the party under Mr. Wallingford, one of the lieutenants, took to its boat without effecting any thing, while Captain Jones sent to a detached building and obtained a candle. He boarded a large ship, kindled a fire in her steerage, and by placing a barrel of tar over the spot, soon had the vessel in flames. The tide being out, this ship lay in the midst of more than a hundred others, high and dry, and Captain Jones flattered himself with the hope of signally revenging the depredations that the enemy had so freely committed on the American coast. But, by this time, the alarm was effectually given, and the entire population appeared on the adjacent high ground, or were seen rushing in numbers towards the shipping. The latter were easily driven back by a show of force, and remaining a sufficient time, as he thought, to make sure of an extensive conflagration, Captain Jones took to his boats and pulled towards his ship. Some guns were fired on the retiring boats without effect; but the people of the place succeeded in extinguishing the flames before the mischief became very extensive.

The hardihood, as well as the nature of this attempt, produced a great alarm along the whole English coast, and from that hour, even to this, the name of Jones, in the minds of the people of Whitehaven, is associated with audacity, destruction, and danger.

While cruising, with the utmost boldness, as it might be in the very heart of the British waters, with the coasts of the three kingdoms frequently in view at the same moment, Captain Jones, who was a native of the country, decided to make an attempt to seize the Earl of Selkirk, who had a seat on St. Mary's Isle, near the point where the Dee flows into the channel. A party landed, and got possession of the house, but its master was absent. The officer in command of the boats so far forgot himself as to bring away a quantity of the family plate, although no other injury was done, or any insult offered. This plate, the value of which did not exceed a hundred pounds, was subsequently purchased of the crew by Captain Jones, and returned to Lady Selkirk, with a letter expressive of his regrets at the occurrence.

After the landing mentioned, the *Ranger* once more steered towards Ireland, Captain Jones still keeping in view his design on the *Drake*, and arrived off Carrickfergus again, on the 24th. The commander of the latter ship, sent out an officer, in one of his boats, to ascertain the character of the stranger. By means of skilful handling, the *Ranger* was kept end-on to the boat, and as the officer in charge of the latter could merely see the ship's stern, although provided with a glass, he suffered himself to be decoyed alongside, and was taken. From the prisoners, Captain Jones learned that intelligence of his descents on Whitehaven and St. Mary's Isle had reached Belfast, and that the people of the *Drake* had weighed the anchor he had lost in his attempt on that ship.

Under these circumstances, Captain Jones believed that the commander of the *Drake* would not long defer coming out in search of his boat ; an expectation that was shortly realised, by the appearance of the English ship under way. The *Ranger* now filled and stood off the land, with a view to draw her enemy more into the channel, where she lay to, in waiting for the latter to come on. Several small vessels accompanied the *Drake*, to witness the combat, and many volunteers had gone on board her, to assist in capturing the American privateer, as it was the fashion of the day to term the vessels of the young republic. The tide being unfavourable, the *Drake* worked out of the roads slowly, and night was approaching before she drew near the *Ranger*.

The *Drake*, when she got sufficiently nigh, hailed, and received the name of her antagonist, by way of challenge, with a request to come on. As the two ships were standing on, the *Drake* a little to leeward and astern, the *Ranger* put her helm up, a manœuvre that the enemy imitated, and the former gave the first broadside, firing as her guns bore. The wind admitted of but few changes, but the battle was fought running free, under easy canvass. It lasted an hour and four minutes, when the *Drake* called for quarter, her ensign being already down.

The English ship was much cut up, both in her hull and aloft, and Captain Jones computed her loss at about forty men. Her captain and lieutenant were both desperately wounded, and died shortly after the engagement. The *Ranger* suffered much less, having Lieutenant Wallingford and one man killed, and six wounded. The *Drake* was not only a heavier ship, but she had a much stronger crew than her antagonist. She had also two guns the most.

After securing her prize and repairing damages, the *Ranger* went round the north of Ireland, and shaped her course for Brest. She was chased repeatedly, but arrived safely at her port with the *Drake*, on the 8th of May.

Whatever may be thought of the conduct of Captain Jones in turning a local knowledge acquired in the manner mentioned, to such an account, there can be no doubt that the course pursued by the enemy on the American coast, would have fully justified the course he took in any other officer in the service ; and it is due to Captain Jones, to say, that he had, personally, been so much vilified by the British press, as quite naturally to have weakened any remains of national attachment that he may formerly have entertained. The natives of Great Britain, that served on the American side, in this great contest, were not essentially in a position different from that of those who had been born in the colonies. The war, in one sense, was a civil war, and the conduct of all who took part in it, was to be measured by the merits of the main question. The Englishman actually established in the colonies, when the struggle commenced, was essentially in the situation of the native ; and if the latter had a moral right to resist the encroachments of the British Parliament, it was a right that extended to the former, since it was not a question of birthplace that was at issue, but one of local and

territorial interests. By transferring himself to England, the native of America would have avoided the injuries, and shared in the advantages of the offensive policy; and by transferring himself to America, the native of England became the subject of its wrongs. Both steps were legal, and it follows as a legitimate consequence, that all the moral as well as legal rights dependent on their exercise, were carried with them.

Mr. Silas Talbot, of Rhode Island, who had been a seaman in his youth, had taken service in the army, and October 10th, 1777, he had been raised to the rank of a Major, to reward him for a spirited attempt to set fire to one of the enemy's cruisers in the Hudson. In the autumn of the present year (1778), Major Talbot headed another expedition against the British schooner *Pigot*, 8, then lying in the eastern passage between Rhode Island and the main land, in a small sloop that had two light guns, and which was manned by 60 volunteers. The *Pigot* had 45 men, and one heavy gun in her bows, besides the rest of her armament. Her commander showed great bravery, actually fighting alone on deck, in his shirt, when every man of his crew had run below. Major Talbot carried the schooner without loss, and for his conduct and gallantry was promoted to be a Lieutenant Colonel. The following year this officer was transferred to the navy, Congress passing an especial resolution to that effect, with directions to the Marine Committee to give him a ship on the first occasion. It does not appear, however, that it was in the power of the committee, at that period of the war, to appoint Captain Talbot to a government vessel, and he is believed to have served, subsequently, in a private armed ship.

It has already been intimated, that the appearance of a French fleet, in July, 1778, off Newport, materially changed the character of the war, so far as the American marine was concerned. On this occasion, the enemy destroyed the following ships at, or near Newport, to prevent their falling into the hands of the French, viz: the *Juno*, 32; *Orpheus*, 32; *Cerberus*, 32; *Lark*, 32; *Flora*, 32; and *Falcon*, 18.

It will give some idea of the condition of the American marine at this time, if we state that a month previously to the arrival of the French, the following vessels were lying at Boston. They appear to have composed most of the disposable naval force of the United States, in the American seas, viz: *Warren*, 32, Captain John Hopkins; *Raleigh*, 32, Captain Thompson; *Deane*, (afterwards *Hague*), 32, Captain S. Nicholson; *Tyrannicide*, 14, State cruiser, Captain Harding; *Independence*, 14, Captain Hazard; *Sampson*, 20; *Hancock*, 20, (formerly *Weymouth*, a packet;) and *Speedwell*, 10. The four last were State cruisers, or privateers. Of this force, Captain Thompson was the senior officer. Several private armed ships were cruising off the eastern coast, at the same time, among which was the *Mars*, 24, Captain Truxtun.

It has been said that many officers of the navy, previously to the period of the war at which we have now arrived, had been compelled to seek service in the privateers, for want of more regular employ-

ment, and among others was Captain Daniel Waters. While in command of the private armed ship *Thorn*, 16, out of Boston, Captain Waters engaged the letter of marque, Governor Tryon, 16, Captain Stebbins, and the *Sir William Erskine*, 18, Captain Hamilton, both full manned. After a sharp action of two hours, the Tryon struck, and the Erskine made sail to escape. Instead of stopping to take possession of his prize, Captain Waters pursued the Erskine, and getting alongside, compelled her also to surrender. Throwing a crew on board this ship, the two vessels now went in quest of the Tryon, which had profited by the situation of the *Thorn*, to endeavour to escape. Favoured by the night, this vessel succeeded in getting off, and the next day the Erskine was sent into port. The *Thorn* had now but 60 men left, and in a few days, she fell in with the *Sparlin*, 18, with 97 men, which she succeeded in taking after a fight of near an hour. The *Thorn*, and both her prizes, arrived safely in Boston.

In consequence of the investigation connected with the loss of the *Alfred*, Captain Thompson was relieved from the command of the *Raleigh* 32, as has been said already, and that ship was given to Captain Barry. Under the orders of this new commander, the *Raleigh* sailed from Boston on the 25th of September, at six in the morning, having a brig and a sloop under convoy. The wind was fresh at N. W., and the frigate run off N. E. At twelve, two strange sail were seen to leeward, distant fifteen or sixteen miles. Orders were given to the convoy to haul nearer to the wind, and to crowd all the sail it could carry, the strangers in chase. After dark the *Raleigh* lost sight of the enemy, as by this time the two ships were ascertained to be, and the wind became light and variable. The *Raleigh* now cleared for action, and kept her people at quarters all night, having tacked towards the land. In the morning it proved to be hazy, and the strangers were not to be seen. The *Raleigh* was still standing towards the land, which she shortly after made ahead, quite near. About noon, the haze clearing away, the enemy were seen in the southern board, and to windward, crowding sail in chase. The weather became thick again, and the *Raleigh* lost sight of her two pursuers, when she hauled off to the eastward. That night no more was seen of the enemy, and at daylight Captain Barry took in every thing, with a view to conceal the position of the ship, which was permitted to drift under bare poles. Finding nothing visible at 6, A. M., the *Raleigh* crowded sail once more, and stood S. E. by E. But at half past 9, the two ships were again discovered astern, and in chase. The *Raleigh* now hauled close upon a wind, heading N. W., with her larboard tacks aboard. The enemy also came to the wind, all three vessels carrying hard with a staggering breeze. The *Raleigh* now fairly outsailed the strangers, running 11 knots 2 fathoms, on a dragged bowline.

Unfortunately, at noon the wind moderated, when the leading vessel of the enemy overhauled the *Raleigh* quite fast, and even the ship astern held way with her. At 4, P. M., the *Raleigh* tacked to the westward, with a view to discover the force of the leading vessel

of the enemy, and, about the same time she made several low islands, the names of which were not known. At 5, P. M., the leading vessel of the enemy having nearly closed, the Raleigh edged away and crossed her fore foot, brailing her mizzen, and taking in her staysails. The enemy showed a battery of 14 guns of a side, including both decks, and set St. George's ensign. In passing, the Raleigh delivered her broadside, which was returned, when the stranger came up under the lee quarter of the American ship, and the action became steady and general. At the second fire, the Raleigh unfortunately lost her fore-topmast, and mizzen top-gallant-mast, which gave the enemy a vast advantage in manœuvring throughout the remainder of the affair. Finding the broadside of the Raleigh getting to be too hot for him, the enemy soon shot ahead, and, for a short time, while the people of the former ship were clearing the wreck, he engaged to windward, and at a distance. Ere long, however, the English vessel edged away and attempted to rake the Raleigh, when Captain Barry bore up, and bringing the ships alongside each other, he endeavoured to board, a step that the other, favoured by all his canvass, and his superiority of sailing in a light breeze, easily avoided. By this time, the second ship had got so near as to render it certain she would very soon close, and, escape by flight being out of the question in the crippled condition of the ship, Captain Barry called a council of his officers. It was determined to make an attempt to run the frigate ashore, the land being then within a few miles. The Raleigh accordingly wore round, and stood for the islands already mentioned, her antagonist sticking to her in the most gallant manner, both ships maintaining the action with spirit. About midnight, however, the enemy hauled off, and left the Raleigh to pursue her course towards the land. The engagement had lasted seven hours, much of the time in close action, and both vessels had suffered materially, the Raleigh in particular, in her spars, rigging, and sails. The darkness, soon after, concealing his ship, Captain Barry had some hopes of getting off among the islands, and was in the act of bending new sails, for that purpose, when the enemy's vessels again came in sight, closing fast. The Raleigh immediately opened a brisk fire from her stern guns, and every human effort was made to force the ship towards the land. The enemy, however, easily closed again, and opened a heavy fire, which was returned by the Raleigh until she grounded, when the largest of the enemy's ships immediately hauled off, to avoid a similar calamity, and, gaining a safe distance, both vessels continued their fire, from positions they had taken on the Raleigh's quarter. Captain Barry, finding that the island was rocky, and that it might be defended, determined to land, and to burn his ship; a project that was rendered practicable by the fact that the enemy had ceased firing, and anchored at the distance of about a mile. A large party of men got on shore, and the boats were about to return for the remainder, when it was discovered that, by the treachery of a petty officer, the ship had surrendered.

The officers and men on the island escaped, but the ship was got off and placed in the British navy. The two ships that took the

Raleigh were the Experiment 50, Captain Wallace, and the Unicorn 22. The latter mounted 28 guns, and was the ship that engaged the Raleigh so closely, so long, and so obstinately. She was much cut up, losing her masts after the action, and had 10 men killed, besides many wounded. The Americans had 25 men killed and wounded, in the course of the whole affair.

Captain Barry gained great credit for his gallantry on this occasion. He escaped to the main with a considerable portion of his crew, though not without great suffering, and a new ship was given to him on the first opportunity. The island on which he first landed, is called the Wooden Ball, and lies about twenty miles from the mouth of the Penobscot; being the outermost of all the islands and rocks in its immediate vicinity. In the chase the Raleigh shifted her ground about two degrees to the northward, and about one to the eastward.

Thus terminated the year 1778, so far as it was connected with the service of the regular marine, though like all that had preceded, or which followed it, in this war, it gave rise to some handsome exploits among the colony cruisers and privateers, some of which there may be occasion to mention in a chapter that will be devoted to that branch of the subject.

CHAPTER IX.

The Alliance sails with Lafayette for France....conspiracy on board....Action of the Hampden with an Indiaman....Nine British vessels captured, and twenty-four British officers made prisoners, by Capt. Hopkins....Valuable prizes sent into Boston by Capt. Whipple....The Cumberland, Capt. Manly, is captured by the Pomona frigate....Capt. Manly in the private armed ship Jason, engages with, and captures two British privateers....Description of the Bon Homme Richard....Capture of a letter of marque, by Paul Jones. ..Disobedience of orders, by Capt. Landais of the Alliance....Capt. Lawrence takes command of the Chesapeake....Action of the Bon Homme Richard with, and capture of the Serapis....Capt. Landais fires into the Richard....she sinks.

THE year 1779 opened with the departure of the Alliance, 32, for France. It has already been stated that the command of this ship had been given to a Captain Landais, who was said to be a French officer of gallantry and merit. Unfortunately the prejudices of the seamen did not answer to the complaisance of the Marine Committee in this respect, and it was found difficult to obtain a crew willing to enlist under a French captain. When General Lafayette, after a detention of several months on the road, in consequence of severe illness, reached Boston near the close of 1778, in order to embark in the Alliance, it was found that the frigate was not yet manned. Desirous of rendering themselves useful to their illustrious guest, the government of Massachusetts offered to complete the ship's complement by impressment, an expedient that had been adopted on more than one occasion during the war; but the just-minded and benevo-

lent Lafayette would not consent to the measure. Anxious to sail, however, for he was entrusted with important interests, recourse was had to a plan to man the ship, which, if less objectionable on the score of principle, was scarcely less so in every other point of view.

The Somerset 64, had been wrecked on the coast of New England, and part of her crew had found their way to Boston. By accepting the proffered services of these men, those of some volunteers from among the prisoners, and those of a few French seamen that were also found in Boston after the departure of their fleet, a motley number was raised in sufficient time to enable the ship to sail on the 11th of January. With this incomplete and mixed crew, Lafayette trusted himself on the ocean, and the result was near justifying the worst forebodings that so ill-advised a measure could have suggested.

After a tempestuous passage, the Alliance got within two day's run of the English coast, when her officers and passengers, of the latter of whom there were many besides General Lafayette and his suite, received the startling information that a conspiracy existed among the English portion of the crew, some seventy or eighty men in all, to kill the officers, seize the vessel, and carry the frigate into England. With a view to encourage such acts of mutiny, the British Parliament had passed a law to reward all those crews that should run away with American ships; and this temptation was too strong for men whose service, however voluntary it might be in appearances, was probably reluctant, and which had been compelled by circumstances, if not by direct coercion.

The intentions of the mutineers appear to have been of the most ruthless and bloodthirsty character. By the original plan, the cry of "Sail ho!" was to be raised about daylight on the morning of the 2d of February, when, as it was known that the officers and passengers would immediately appear on the quarter-deck, the attempt was to commence by seizing them in a body. The mutineers were divided into four parties, of which one was to get possession of the magazine, the second of the wardroom, the third of the cabin, and the fourth of the upper-deck aft. In the event of resistance by the officers at the latter point, the four nine pound guns on the fore-castle were to be pointed aft, and to sweep the quarter-deck. With this view, a gunner's mate, who was a ringleader, had privately put into the guns charges of canister-shot. Some fire-arms had also been secretly obtained by a sergeant of marines, who belonged to the mutiny.

On the night of the 1st of February, the execution of this plot was postponed until four o'clock of the afternoon of the 2d, instead of taking place at the hour of daylight, as had been previously arranged. Captain Landais, who was exceedingly offensive to the conspirators, was to be put into a boat, without food, water, oars or sails, heavily ironed, and to be turned loose on the ocean. The gunner, carpenter, and boatswain were to have been killed on the spot. The marine officer and surgeon were to have been hanged, quartered, and their bodies cast into the sea. The sailing-master was to have been seized up to the mizen-mast, scarified, cut into morsels and

thrown overboard. To each of the lieutenants was to have been offered the option of navigating the ship into the nearest British port, or of walking a plank. The passengers were to have been confined, and given up as prisoners, in England. With these fell intentions in their hearts, the conspirators fortunately decided to defer the execution of their plot until the hour just named.

Among the crew of the *Alliance*, was a seaman of more than usual knowledge of his calling, and of great decency of exterior. By his accent, this man, though regularly entered as a volunteer and an American, was supposed to be an Irishman, and the mutineers were desirous of obtaining his assistance, under the impression that he might direct them, and take sufficient charge of the ship to prevent the lieutenants from deceiving them as to their position, should the latter consent to navigate her into England. To this person, then, in the course of the morning of the very day set for the execution of their murderous plan, the mutineers revealed their conspiracy, inviting him to take a conspicuous part in it. The seaman was in fact an American, who had lived a long time in Ireland, where he had acquired the accent of the nation, but where he had lost none of the feelings of country and kindred. Affecting to listen to the proposition with favour, he got most of their secrets out of the mutineers, using the utmost prudence and judgment in all his proceedings. It was near three o'clock in the afternoon, before this new ringleader could manage to get into the cabin unseen, where he made Captain Landais and General Lafayette acquainted with all he knew. Not a moment was to be lost. The officers and other passengers were apprised of what was going on, such men as could certainly be relied on were put on their guard, and a few minutes before the time set for the signal to be given, the gentlemen rushed in a body on deck, with drawn swords, where the American and French seamen joined them, armed. The leading mutineers were instantly seized. Between thirty and forty of the English were put in irons, it being thought impolitic to arrest any more, for at this inopportune moment a large vessel hove in sight, and was soon made out to be an enemy's twenty gun ship.

As is usual in such cases, some of the ringleaders betrayed their companions, on a promise of pardon, when all the previous arrangements were revealed. Believing the moment unfavourable to engage even an inferior force, Captain Landais, after a little manœuvring permitted the ship in sight to escape. On the 6th of February, the *Alliance* arrived safely at Brest.

This is the only instance that has ever transpired, of a plan to make a serious mutiny under the flag of the United States of America.* A few cases of momentary revolts have occurred, which principally arose from a defective mode of enlistment, and in all of which the authority of the officers have prevailed, after short and insignificant contests. It may be added, as a just source of national pride, that, in nearly every emergency, whether on board ships of war, or on board of merchant vessels, the native American has been

* English prisoners who had enlisted in the navy, were frequently troublesome, but no other direct mutiny was plotted.





John Paul Jones

found true to the obligations of society; and it is a singular proof of his disposition to submit to legal authority, however oppressive or unjust may be its operation in his particular case, that in many known instances in which English seamen have revolted against their own officers, and in their own navy, the impressed and injured American has preferred order, and submission to even the implied obligations of a compelled service, to rushing into the dangers of revolt and disobedience. In opposition to this respectable characteristic, may be put in high relief, the well ascertained fact, that when left in captured vessels, or placed in situations where the usages of mankind tolerate resistance, these very men have required as vigilant watching as any others; it being probable that more American ships have been retaken from their prize crews by American seamen left on board them, within the last sixty years, than have been retaken by the seamen of all the remaining captured vessels in Christendom. Quiet, prudent, observing, hardy, and bold, the American seaman is usually ready to listen to reason, and to defer to the right; traits that make him perhaps the most orderly and submissive of all mariners, when properly and legally commanded, and the most dangerous when an occasion arises for him to show his promptitude, intelligence, and spirit.

On reaching Brest, the mutineers were placed in a French gaol, and, after some delay, were exchanged as prisoners of war, without any other punishment; the noble-minded Lafayette, in particular, feeling averse to treating foreigners as it would have been a duty to treat natives under similar circumstances.

We shall now revert to the more regular warfare of the period at which we have arrived.

One of the first nautical engagements of the year 1779, occurred to the *Hampden* 22, a ship that sailed out of Massachusetts, though it is believed on private account. The *Hampden* was cruising in the Atlantic, lat. 47°, long. 28°, when she made a strange sail to windward. A small armed schooner was in company with the *Hampden*, and a signal was made by the latter, for the former to join. Night coming on, however, the two vessels separated, when the *Hampden* stood towards the stranger alone. At daylight, the American and the Englishman were a long gun-shot apart, when the former crowded sail, and at seven in the morning, drawing up under the lee quarter of the chase, gave him a broadside. Until this moment, the stranger had kept all his guns housed, but he now showed thirteen of a side, and delivered his fire. It was soon perceived on board the *Hampden* that they were engaged with a ship of a force altogether superior to their own. Still, hoping that she might be badly manned, and receiving no material damage at the commencement of the fight, the commander of the *Hampden* determined to continue the action. A hot engagement followed, which lasted three hours, within pistol-shot, when the *Hampden* was compelled to haul off, being in momentary danger of losing her masts. The American lost a Captain Pickering killed,—but whether he was a marine officer, or her commander, does not appear,—and had twenty men killed and wounded. The

enemy, an Indianman was much injured also, though her loss was never ascertained. This was one of the most closely contested actions of the war, both sides appearing to have fought with perseverance and gallantry.

On the 18th of April, the U. S. ships Warren 32, Captain J. B. Hopkins, Queen of France 28, Captain Olney, and Ranger 18, Captain Simpson, sailed from Boston, in company, on a cruise; Captain Hopkins being the senior officer. When a few days from port, these vessels captured a British privateer of 14 guns, from the people of which they ascertained that a small fleet of armed transports and store-ships had just sailed from New York, bound to Georgia, with supplies for the enemy's forces in that quarter. The three cruisers crowded sail in chase, and off Cape Henry, late in the day, they had the good fortune to come up with nine sail, seven of which they captured, with a trifling resistance. Favoured by the darkness, the two others escaped. The vessels taken proved to be, his Britannic Majesty's ship Jason, 20, with a crew of 150 men; the Maria armed ship, of 16 guns, and 84 men; and the privateer schooner Hibernia, 8, with a crew of 45 men. The Maria had a full cargo of flour. In addition to these vessels, the brigs Patriot, Prince Frederick, Bachelor John, and the schooner Chance, all laden with stores, fell into the hands of the Americans. Among the prisoners were twenty-four British officers, who were on their way to join their regiments at the south.*

The command of the Queen of France was now given to Captain Rathburne, when that ship sailed on another cruise, in company with the Ranger, and the Providence 28, Captain Whipple; the latter being the senior officer. In July, this squadron fell in with a large fleet of English merchantmen, that was convoyed by a ship of the line, and some smaller cruisers, and succeeded in cutting out several valuable prizes, of which eight arrived at Boston, their estimated value exceeding a million of dollars. In the way of pecuniary benefits, this was the most successful cruise made in the war.

Owing to the want of ships in the navy, Captain Manly was compelled to seek service in a privateer called the Cumberland. In this vessel he was captured by the Pomona frigate, and, obtaining his exchange, he went on a cruise in the Jason private armed ship, in which vessel, in July of the present year, he was attacked by two of the enemy's privateers, one of 18, and the other of 16 guns, when running boldly between them, the Jason poured in her fire, larboard and starboard, with so much effect, that both surrendered.

Quitting the American seas, we will once more return to the other hemisphere.

Paul Jones had obtained so much celebrity for his cruise in the Ranger, that he remained in France, after the departure of his ship for America, in the hope of receiving a more important command, the inducement, indeed, which had originally brought him to Europe.

* A Colonel Campbell was the highest in rank, and if this were the officer of the same name and rank taken off Boston, in 1776, he was twice made a prisoner on board transports, during this war.

Many different projects to this effect had been entertained and abandoned, during the years 1778 and 1779, by one of which a descent was to have been made on Liverpool, with a body of troops commanded by Lafayette. All these plans, however, produced no results, and after many vexatious repulses in his applications for service, an arrangement was finally made to give this celebrated officer employment that was as singular in its outlines, as it proved to be inconvenient, not to say impracticable, in execution.

By a letter from M. de Sartine, the minister of the marine, dated February 4th, 1779, it appears that the King of France had consented to purchase and put at the disposition of Captain Jones, the *Duras*, an old Indiaman of some size, then lying at l'Orient. To this vessel were added three more that were procured by means of M. le Ray de Chaumont, a banker of eminence connected with the court, and who acted on the occasion, under the orders of the French ministry. Dr. Franklin, who, as minister of the United States, was supposed, in a legal sense, to direct the whole affair, added the *Alliance*, 32, in virtue of the authority that he held from Congress. The vessels that were thus chosen, formed a little squadron, composed of the *Duras*, *Alliance*, *Pallas*, *Cerf*, and *Vengeance*. The *Pallas* was a merchantman bought for the occasion; the *Vengeance* a small brig that had also been purchased expressly for the expedition; the *Cerf* was a fine large cutter, and, with the exception of the *Alliance*, the only vessel of the squadron fitted for war. All the ships but the *Alliance* were French built, and they were placed under the American flag, by the following arrangement.

The officers received appointments, which were to remain valid for a limited period only, from Dr. Franklin, who had held blank commissions to be filled up at his own discretion, ever since his arrival in Europe, while the vessels were to show the American ensign, and no other. In short, the French ships were to be considered as American ships, during this particular service, and when it was terminated, they were to revert to their former owners. The laws and provisions of the American navy were to govern, and command was to be exercised, and to descend, agreeably to its usages. Such officers as already had rank in the American service, were to take precedence of course, agreeably to the dates of their respective commissions, while the new appointments were to be regulated by the new dates. By an especial provision, Captain Jones was to be commander-in-chief, a post he would have been entitled to fill by his original commission, however, Captain Landais of the *Alliance*, the only other regular captain in the squadron, being his junior. The joint right of the American minister and of the French government, to instruct the commodore, and to direct the movements of the squadron, was also recognised.

From what source the money was actually obtained by which this squadron was fitted out, is not exactly known, nor is it now probable that it will ever be accurately ascertained. Although the name of the king was used, it is not impossible that private adventure was at the bottom of the enterprise, though it seems certain that the government was so far concerned as to procure the vessels, and to a certain

extent to use its stores. Dr. Franklin expressly states, that he made no advances for any of the ships employed.

As every thing connected with this remarkable enterprise has interest, we shall endeavour to give the reader a better idea of the materials, physical and moral, that composed the force of Commodore Jones, in his memorable cruise.

After many vexatious delays, the *Duras*, her name having been changed to that of the *Bon Homme Richard*, in compliment to Dr. Franklin, was eventually equipped and manned. Directions had been given to cast the proper number of eighteen-pounders for her, but, it being ascertained that there would not be time to complete this order, some old twelves were procured in their places. With this material change in the armament, the *Richard*, as she was familiarly called by the seamen, got ready for sea. She was, properly, a single-decked ship; or carried her armament on one gun-deck, with the usual additions on the quarter-deck and fore-castle; but Commodore Jones, with a view of attacking some of the larger convoys of the enemy, caused twelve ports to be cut in the gun-room below, where six old eighteen-pounders were mounted, it being the intention to fight all the guns on one side, in smooth water. The height of the ship admitted of this arrangement, though it was foreseen that these guns could not be of much use, except in very moderate weather, or when engaging to leeward. On her main, or proper gun-deck, the ship had twenty-eight ports, the regular construction of an English 38, agreeably to the old mode of rating. Here the twelve-pounders were placed. On the quarter-deck and fore-castle, were mounted eight nines, making in all a mixed and rather light armament of 42 guns. If the six eighteens were taken away, the force of the *Bon Homme Richard*, so far as her guns were concerned, would have been about equal to that of a 32 gun frigate. The vessel was clumsily constructed, having been built many years before, and had one of those high old-fashioned poops, that caused the sterns of the ships launched in the early part of the eighteenth century to resemble towers.

To manage a vessel of this singular armament and doubtful construction, Commodore Jones was compelled to receive on board a crew of a still more equivocal composition. A few Americans were found to fill the stations of sea officers, on the quarter-deck and forward, but the remainder of the people were a mixture of English, Irish, Scotch, Portuguese, Norwegians, Germans, Spaniards, Swedes, Italians and Malays, with occasionally a man from one of the islands. To keep this motley crew in order, one hundred and thirty-five soldiers were put on board, under the command of some officers of inferior rank. These soldiers, or marines, were recruited at random, and were not much less singularly mixed, as to countries, than the regular crew.

As the squadron was about to sail, M. Le Ray appeared at l'Orient, and presented an agreement, or *concordat* as it was termed, for the signature of all the commanders. To this singular compact, which, in some respects, reduced a naval expedition to the level of a

partnership, Commodore Jones ascribed much of the disobedience among his captains, of which he subsequently complained. It will be found in the appendix.*

On the 19th of June 1779, the ships sailed from the anchorage under the Isle of Groix, off l'Orient, bound to the southward, with a few transports and coasters under their convoy. The transports and coasters were seen into their several places of destination, in the Garonne, Loire, and other ports, but not without the commencement of that course of disobedience of orders, unseamanlike conduct, and neglect, which so signally marked the whole career of this ill assorted force. While lying to, off the coast, the Alliance, by palpable mismanagement, got foul of the Richard, and lost her mizen mast; carrying away, at the same time, the head, cut-water, and jib-boom of the latter. It now became necessary to return to port to refit.

While steering northerly again, the Cerf cutter was sent in chase of a strange sail, and parted company. The next morning she engaged a small English cruiser of 14 guns, and after a sharp conflict of more than an hour, obliged her to strike, but was compelled to abandon her prize in consequence of the appearance of a vessel of superior force. The Cerf, with a loss of several men killed and wounded, made the best of her way to l'Orient.

On the 22d, three enemy's vessels of war came in sight of the squadron, and, having the wind, they ran down in a line abreast, when most probably deceived by the height and general appearance of the Richard, they hauled up, and, by carrying a press of sail, escaped.

On the 26th, the Alliance and Pallas parted company with the Richard, leaving that ship with no other consort than the Vengeance brig. On reaching the Penmarks, the designated rendezvous, the missing vessels did not appear. On the 29th, the Vengeance having made the best of her way for the roads of Groix by permission, the Richard fell in with two more of the enemy's cruisers, which, after some indications of an intention to come down, also ran, no doubt under the impression that the American frigate was a ship of two decks. On this occasion Commodore Jones expressed himself satisfied with the spirit of his crew, the people manifesting a strong wish to engage. On the last of the month, the Richard returned to the roads from which she had sailed, and anchored. The Alliance and Pallas came in also.

Another delay occurred. A court was convened to inquire into the conduct of Captain Landais of the Alliance, and of other officers, in running foul of the Richard, and both ships underwent repairs. Luckily a cartel arrived from England, at this moment, bringing with her more than a hundred exchanged American seamen, most of whom joined the squadron. This proved to be a great and important accession to the composition of the crew of not only the Richard, but to that of the Alliance, the latter ship having been but little better off than the former in this particular. Among those who came from the English prisons, was Mr. Richard Dale, who had been

* See note A, end of volume.

taken as a master's mate, in the Lexington 14. This young officer did not reach France in the cartel, however, but had previously escaped from Mill prison and joined the Richard. Commodore Jones had now become sensible of his merit, and in reorganising his crew, he had him promoted, and rated him as his first lieutenant. The Richard had now nearly a hundred Americans in her, and, with the exception of the commodore himself and one midshipman, all her quarter-deck sea-officers were of the number. Many of the petty officers too, were of this class. In a letter written August the 11th, Commodore Jones states that the crew of the Richard consisted of 380 souls, including 137 marines, or soldiers.

On the 14th of August, 1779, the squadron sailed a second time from the roads of Groix, having the French privateers Monsieur and Granville in company, and under the orders of Commodore Jones. On the 18th a valuable prize was taken, and some difficulties arising with the commander of the Monsieur in consequence, the latter parted company in the night of the 19th. This was a serious loss in the way of force, that ship having mounted no less than forty guns. A prize was also taken on the 21st. On the 23d, the ships were off Cape Clear, and, while towing the Richard's head round in a calm, the crew of a boat manned by Englishmen, cut the tow-line, and escaped. Mr. Cutting Lunt, the sailing-master of the ship, manned another boat, and taking with him four soldiers, he pursued the fugitives. A fog coming on, the latter boat was not able to find the ships again, and her people fell into the hands of the enemy. Through this desertion and its immediate consequences, the Richard lost twenty of her best men.

The day after the escape of the boat, the Cerf was sent close in to reconnoitre, and to look for the missing people, and owing to some circumstance that has never been explained, but which does not appear to have left any reproach upon her commander, this vessel never rejoined the squadron.

A gale of wind followed, during which the Alliance and Pallas separated, and the Granville parted company with a prize, according to orders. The separation of the Pallas is explained by the fact that she had broken her tiller; but that of the Alliance can only be imputed to the unofficerlike, as well as unseamanlike, conduct of her commander. On the morning of the 27th, the brig Vengeance was the only vessel in company with the commodore.

On the morning of the 31st of August, the Bon Homme Richard, being off Cape Wrath, captured a large letter of marque bound from London to Quebec, a circumstance that proves the expedients to which the English ship-masters were then driven to avoid capture, this vessel having actually gone north-about to escape the cruisers on the ordinary track. While in chase of the letter of marque, the Alliance hove in sight, having another London ship, a Jamaica-man, in company as a prize.

Captain Landais, of the Alliance, an officer, who, as it has since been ascertained, had been obliged to quit the French navy on account of a singularly unfortunate temper, now began to exhibit a

disorganising and mutinous spirit, pretending, as his ship was the only real American vessel in the squadron, that he was superior to the orders of the commodore, and that he would do as he pleased with that frigate.

In the afternoon a strange sail was made, and the *Richard* showed the *Alliance*'s number, with an order to chase. Instead of obeying this signal, Captain Landais wore and laid the head of his ship in a direction opposite to that necessary to execute the order! Several other signals were disobeyed in an equally contemptuous manner, and the control of Commodore Jones over the movements of this ship, which, on the whole, ought to have been the most efficient in the squadron, may be said to have ceased.

Commodore Jones now shaped his course for the second rendezvous he had appointed, in the hope of meeting the missing ships. On the 2d of September, the *Pallas* rejoined, having captured nothing. Between this date and the 13th of September, the squadron continued its course round Scotland, the ships separating and rejoining constantly, and Captain Landais assuming powers over the prizes, as well as over his own vessel, that were altogether opposed to discipline, and to the usages of every regular marine. On the last day named, the Cheviot Hills were visible.

Understanding that a twenty gun ship with two or three man-of-war cutters were lying at anchor off Leith, in the Frith of Forth, Commodore Jones now planned a descent on that town. At this time the *Alliance* was absent, and the *Pallas* and *Vengeance* having chased to the southward, the necessity of communicating with those vessels produced a delay fatal to a project which had been admirably conceived, and which there is reason to think might have succeeded. After joining his two subordinates, and giving his orders, Commodore Jones beat into the Frith, and continued working up towards Leith, until the 17th, when, being just out of gun-shot of the town, the boats were got out and manned. The troops to be landed were commanded by M. de Chamilliard, while Mr. Dale, of the *Richard*, was put at the head of the seamen. The latter had received his orders, and was just about to go into his boat, when a squall struck the ships, and was near dismasting the commodore. Finding himself obliged to fill his sails, Commodore Jones endeavoured to keep the ground he had gained, but the weight of the wind finally compelled all the vessels to bear up, and a severe gale succeeding, they were driven into the North sea, where one of the prizes foundered.

It is not easy to say what would have been the result of this dash-ing enterprise, had the weather permitted the attempt. The audacity of the measure might have insured a victory; and in the whole design we discover the decision, high moral courage, and deep enthusiasm of the officer who conceived it. It was the opinion of Mr. Dale, a man of singular modesty, great simplicity of character, and prudence, that success would have rewarded the effort.

Abandoning this bold project with reluctance, Commodore Jones appeared to have meditated another still more daring; but his *colleagues*, as he bitterly styles his captains in one of his letters, refused

to join in it. It is worthy of remark, that when Commodore Jones laid this second scheme, which has never been explained, before the young sea-officers of his own ship, they announced their readiness as one man to second him, heart and hand. The enterprise was dropped, however, in consequence of the objections of Captain Cottineau, of the *Pallas*, in particular, an officer for whose judgment the commodore appears to have entertained much respect.

The *Pallas* and *Vengeance* even left the *Richard*, probably with a view to prevent the attempt to execute this nameless scheme, and the commodore was compelled to follow his captains to the southward, or to lose them altogether. Off Whitby the ships last named joined again, and on the 21st the *Richard* chased a collier ashore between Flamborough Head and the Spurn. The next day the *Richard* appeared in the mouth of the Humber, with the *Vengeance* in company, and several vessels were taken or destroyed. Pilots were enticed on board, and a knowledge of the state of things in-shore was obtained. It appeared that the whole coast was alarmed, and that many persons were actually burying their plate. Some twelve or thirteen vessels in all had now been taken by the squadron, and quite as many more destroyed; and coupling these facts with the appearance of the ships on the coast and in the Frith, rumour had swelled the whole into one of its usual terrific tales. Perhaps no vessels of war had ever before excited so much local alarm on the coast of Great Britain.

Under the circumstances, Commodore Jones did not think it prudent to remain so close in with the land, and he stood out towards Flamborough Head. Here two large sails were made, which next day proved to be the *Alliance* and the *Pallas*. This was on the 23d of September, and brings us down to the most memorable event in this extraordinary cruise.

The wind was light at the southward, the weather smooth, and many vessels were in sight steering in different directions. About noon, his original squadron, with the exception of the *Cerf* and the two privateers, being all in company, Commodore Jones manned one of the pilot boats he had detained, and sent her in chase of a brig that was lying to, to windward. On board this little vessel were put Mr. Henry Lunt, the second lieutenant, and fifteen men, all of whom were out of the ship for the rest of the day. In consequence of the loss of the two boats off Cape Clear, the absence of this party in the pilot boat, and the number of men that had been put in prizes, the *Richard* was now left with only one sea-lieutenant, and with but little more than three hundred souls on board, exclusively of the prisoners. Of the latter, there were between one and two hundred in the ship.

The pilot boat had hardly left the *Bon Homme Richard*, when the leading ships of a fleet of more than forty sail were seen stretching out on a bowline, from behind Flamborough Head, turning down towards the Straits of Dover. From previous intelligence this fleet was immediately known to contain the Baltic ships, under the convoy of the *Serapis* 44, Captain Richard Pearson, and a hired ship that had been put into the King's service, called the *Countess* of

Scarborough. The latter was commanded by Captain Piercy, and mounted 22 guns. As the interest of the succeeding details will chiefly centre in the *Serapis* and the *Richard*, it may be well to give a more minute account of the actual force of the former.

At the period of which we are now writing, forty-fours were usually built on two decks. Such, then, was the construction of this ship, which was new, and had the reputation of being a fast vessel. On her lower gun-deck she mounted 20 eighteen-pound guns: on her upper gun-deck, 20 nine-pound guns; and on her quarter-deck and forecastle, 10 six-pound guns; making an armament of 50 guns in the whole. She had a regularly trained man-of-war's crew of 320 souls, 15 of whom, however, were said to have been Lascars.

When the squadron made this convoy, the men-of-war were in-shore astern, and to leeward, probably with a view to keep the merchantmen together. The bailiffs of Scarborough, perceiving the danger into which this little fleet was running, had sent a boat off to the *Serapis* to apprise her of the presence of a hostile force, and Captain Pearson fired two guns, signalling the leading vessels to come under his lee. These orders were disregarded, however, the headmost ships standing out until they were about a league from the land.

Commodore Jones having ascertained the character of the fleet in sight, showed a signal for a general chase, another to recall the lieutenant in the pilot boat, and crossed royal yards on board the *Richard*. These signs of hostility alarmed the nearest English ships, which hurriedly tacked together, fired alarm guns, let fly their top-gallant sheets, and made other signals of the danger they were in, while they now gladly availed themselves of the presence of the vessels of war, to run to leeward, or sought shelter closer in with the land. The *Serapis*, on the contrary, signalled the Scarborough to follow, and hauled boldly out to sea, until she had got far enough to windward, when she tacked and stood in-shore again, to cover her convoy.

The *Alliance* being much the fastest vessel of the American squadron, took the lead in the chase, speaking the *Pallas* as she passed. It has been proved that Captain Landais told the commander of the latter vessel on this occasion, that if the stranger proved to be a fifty, they had nothing to do but to endeavour to escape. His subsequent conduct fully confirmed this opinion, for no sooner had he run down near enough to the two English vessels of war, to ascertain their force, than he hauled up, and stood off from the land again. All this was not only contrary to the regular order of battle, but contrary to the positive command of Commodore Jones, who had kept the signal to form a line abroad, which should have brought the *Alliance* astern of the *Richard*, and the *Pallas* in the van. Just at this time, the *Pallas* spoke the *Richard* and inquired what station she should take, and was also directed to form the line. But the extraordinary movements of Captain Landais appear to have produced some indecision in the commander of the *Pallas*, as he too, soon after tacked and stood off from the land. Captain Cottineau, however, was a

brave man, and subsequently did his duty in the action, and this manœuvre has been explained by the *Richard's* hauling up suddenly for the land, which induced him to think that her crew had mutinied and were running away with the ship. Such was the want of confidence that prevailed in a force so singularly composed, and such were the disadvantages under which this celebrated combat was fought!

So far, however, from meditating retreat or mutiny, the people of the *Bon Homme Richard* had gone cheerfully to their quarters, although every man on board was conscious of the superiority of the force with which they were about to contend; and the high unconquerable spirit of the commander appears to have communicated itself to the crew.

It was now quite dark, and Commodore Jones was compelled to follow the movements of the enemy by the aid of a night-glass. It is probable that the obscurity which prevailed added to the indecision of the commander of the *Pallas*, for from this time until the moon rose, objects at a distance were distinguished with difficulty, and even after the moon appeared, with uncertainty. The *Richard*, however, stood steadily on, and about half past seven, she came up with the *Serapis*, the *Scarborough* being a short distance to leeward. The American ship was to windward, and as she drew slowly near, Captain Pearson hailed. The answer was equivocal, and both ships delivered their entire broadsides nearly simultaneously. The water being quite smooth, Commodore Jones had relied materially on the eighteens that were in the gun-room; but at this discharge two of the six that were fired bursted, blowing up the deck above, and killing or wounding a large proportion of the people that were stationed below. This disaster caused all the heavy guns to be instantly deserted, for the men had no longer confidence in their metal. It at once, reduced the broadside of the *Richard* to about a third less than that of her opponent, not to include the disadvantage of the manner in which the force that remained was distributed among light guns. In short, the combat was now between a twelve-pounder and an eighteen-pounder frigate; a species of contest in which, it has been said, we know not with what truth, the former has never been known to prevail. Commodore Jones informs us himself, that all his hopes, after this accident, rested on the twelve-pounders that were under the command of his first lieutenant.

The *Richard*, having backed her topsails, exchanged several broadsides, when she filled again and shot ahead of the *Serapis*, which ship luffed across her stern and came up on the weather quarter of her antagonist, taking the wind out of her sails, and, in her turn, passing ahead. All this time, which consumed half an hour, the cannonading was close and furious. The *Scarborough* now drew near, but it is uncertain whether she fired or not. On the side of the Americans it is affirmed that she raked the *Richard* at least once; but, by the report of her own commander, it would appear that, on account of the obscurity and the smoke, he was afraid to discharge his guns, not knowing which ship might be the friend or

which the foe. Unwilling to lie by, and to be exposed to shot uselessly, Captain Piercy edged away from the combatants, exchanging a broadside or two, at a great distance, with the *Alliance*, and shortly afterwards was engaged at close quarters by the *Pallas*, which ship compelled him to strike, after a creditable resistance of about an hour.

Having disposed of the inferior ships, we can confine ourselves to the principal combatants. As the *Serapis* kept her luff, sailing and working better than the *Richard*, it was the intention of Captain Pearson to pay broad off across the latter's fore-foot, as soon as he had got far enough ahead; but making the attempt, and finding he had not room, he put his helm hard down to keep clear of his adversary, when the double movement brought the two ships nearly in a line, the *Serapis* leading. By these uncertain evolutions, the English ship lost some of her way, while the American, having kept her sails trimmed, not only closed, but actually ran aboard of her antagonist, bows on, a little on her weather quarter. The wind being light, much time was consumed in these different manœuvres, and near an hour had elapsed between the firing of the first guns, and the moment when the vessels got foul of each other in the manner just described.

The English now thought that it was the intention of the Americans to board them, and a few minutes passed in the uncertainty which such an expectation would create; but the positions of the vessels were not favourable for either party to pass into the opposing ship. There being at this moment a perfect cessation of the firing, Captain Pearson demanded, "Have you struck your colours?" "I have not yet begun to fight," was the answer.

The yards of the *Richard* were braced aback, and, the sails of the *Serapis* being full, the ships separated. As soon as far enough asunder, the *Serapis* put her helm hard down, laid all aback forward, shivered her after-sails, and wore short round on her heel, or was box-hauled, with a view, most probably, of luffing up athwart the bow of her enemy, in order to again rake her. In this position the *Richard* would have been fighting her starboard, and the *Serapis* her larboard guns; but Commodore Jones, by this time, was conscious of the hopelessness of success against so much heavier metal, and after having backed astern some distance, he filled on the other tack, luffing up with the intention of meeting the enemy as he came to the wind, and of laying him athwart hawse. In the smoke, one party or the other miscalculated the distance, for the two vessels came foul again, the bowsprit of the English ship passing over the poop of the American. As neither had much way, the collision did but little injury, and Commodore Jones, with his own hands, immediately lashed the enemy's head-gear to his mizen-mast. The pressure on the after sails of the *Serapis*, which vessel was nearly before the wind at the time, brought her hull round, and the two ships gradually fell close alongside of each other, head and stern, the jib-boom of the *Serapis* giving way with the strain. A spare anchor of the English ship now hooked in the quarter of the American, and

additional lashings were got out on board the latter to secure her in this position.

Captain Pearson, who was as much aware of his advantage in a regular combat as his opponent could be of his own inferiority, no sooner perceived that the vessels were foul, than he dropped an anchor, in the hope that the *Richard* would drift clear of him. But such an expectation was perfectly futile, as the yards were interlocked, the hulls were pressed close against each other, there were lashings fore and aft, and even the ornamental work aided in holding the ships together. When the cable of the *Serapis* took the strain, the vessels slowly tended, with the bows of the *Serapis* and the stern of the *Richard* to the tide. At this instant the English made an attempt to board, but were repulsed with trifling loss.

All this time the battle raged. The lower ports of the *Serapis* having been closed, as the vessel swung, to prevent boarding, they were now blown off, in order to allow the guns to be run out; and cases actually occurred in which the rammers had to be thrust into the ports of the opposite ship in order to be entered into the muzzles of their proper guns. It is evident that such a conflict must have been of short duration. In effect, the heavy metal of the *Serapis*, in one or two discharges, cleared all before it, and the main-deck guns of the *Richard* were in a great measure abandoned. Most of the people went on the upper-deck, and a great number collected on the forecastle, where they were safe from the fire of the enemy, continuing to fight by throwing grenades and using muskets.

In this stage of the combat, the *Serapis* was tearing her antagonist to pieces below, almost without resistance from her enemy's batteries, only two guns on the quarter-deck, and three or four of the twelves, being worked at all. To the former, by shifting a gun from the larboard side, Commodore Jones succeeded in adding a third, all of which were used with effect, under his immediate inspection, to the close of the action. He could not muster force enough to get over a second gun. But the combat would now have soon terminated, had it not been for the courage and activity of the people aloft. Strong parties had been placed in the tops, and, at the end of a short contest, the Americans had driven every man belonging to the enemy below; after which they kept up so animated a fire, on the quarter-deck of the *Serapis* in particular, as to drive nearly every man off it, that was not shot down.

Thus, while the English had the battle nearly to themselves below, their enemies had the control above the upper-deck. Having cleared the tops of the *Serapis*, some American seamen lay out on the *Richard*'s main-yard, and began to throw hand-grenades upon the two upper decks of the English ship; the men of the forecastle of their own vessel seconding these efforts, by casting the same combustibles through the ports of the *Serapis*. At length one man, in particular, became so hardy as to take his post on the extreme end of the yard, whence, provided with a bucket filled with combustibles, and a match, he dropped the grenades with so much precision that one passed through the main-hatchway. The powder-boys of the

Serapis had got more cartridges up than were wanted, and, in their hurry, they had carelessly laid a row of them on the main-deck, in a line with the guns. The grenade just mentioned set fire to some loose powder that was lying near, and the flash passed from cartridge to cartridge, beginning abreast of the main-mast, and running quite aft.

The effect of this explosion was awful. More than twenty men were instantly killed, many of them being left with nothing on them but the collars and wristbands of their shirts, and the waistbands of their duck trowsers; while the official returns of the ship, a week after the action, show that there were no less than thirty-eight wounded on board, still alive, who had been injured in this manner, and of whom thirty were then said to be in great danger. Captain Pearson described this explosion as having destroyed nearly all the men at the five or six aftermost guns. On the whole, near sixty of the Serapis' people must have been instantly disabled by this sudden blow.

The advantage thus obtained, by the coolness and intrepidity of the topman, in a great measure restored the chances of the combat, and, by lessening the fire of the enemy, enabled Commodore Jones to increase his. In the same degree that it encouraged the crew of the Richard, it diminished the hopes of the people of the Serapis. One of the guns under the immediate inspection of Commodore Jones had been pointed some time against the main-mast of his enemy, while the two others had seconded the fire of the tops, with grape and canister. Kept below decks by this double attack, where a scene of frightful horror was present in the agonies of the wounded, and the effects of the explosion, the spirits of the English began to droop, and there was a moment when a trifle would have induced them to submit. From this despondency they were temporarily raised, by one of those unlooked for events that characterise the vicissitudes of battle.

After exchanging the ineffective and distant broadsides, already mentioned, with the Scarborough, the Alliance had kept standing off and on, to leeward of the two principal ships, out of the direction of their shot, when, about half past eight she appeared crossing the stern of the Serapis and the bow of the Richard, firing at such a distance as to render it impossible to say which vessel would suffer the most. As soon as she had drawn out of the range of her own guns, her helm was put up, and she ran down near a mile to leeward, hovering about, until the firing had ceased between the Pallas and the Scarborough, when she came within hail and spoke both of these vessels. Captain Cottineau of the Pallas earnestly entreated Captain Landais to take possession of his prize, and allow him to go to the assistance of the Richard, or to stretch up to windward in the Alliance himself, and succour the commodore.

After some delay, Captain Landais took the important duty of assisting his consort, into his own hands, and making two long stretches, under his topsails, he appeared, about the time at which we have arrived in the narration of the combat, directly to windward of the two ships, with the head of the Alliance to the westward

Here the latter ship once more opened her fire, doing equal damage, at least, to friend and foe. Keeping away a little, and still continuing her fire, the Alliance was soon on the larboard quarter of the Richard, and, it is even affirmed, that her guns were discharged until she had got nearly abeam.

Fifty voices now hailed to tell the people of the Alliance that they were firing into the wrong ship, and three lanterns were shown, in a line, on the off side of the Richard, which was the regular signal of recognition for a night action. An officer was directed to hail, and to command Captain Landais to lay the enemy aboard, and the question being put whether the order was comprehended, an answer was given in the affirmative.

As the moon had been up some time, it was impossible not to distinguish between the vessels, the Richard being all black, while the Serapis had yellow sides, and the impression seems to have been general in the former vessel, that she had been attacked intentionally. At the discharge of the first guns of the Alliance, the people left one or two of the twelve on board the Richard, which they had begun to fight again, saying that the Englishmen in the Alliance had got possession of the ship, and were helping the enemy. It appears that this discharge dismounted a gun or two, extinguished several lanterns on the main deck, and did a great deal of damage aloft.

The Alliance hauled off to some distance, keeping always on the off side of the Richard, and soon after she reappeared edging down on the larboard beam of her consort, hauling up athwart the bows of that ship and the stern of her antagonist. On this occasion, it is affirmed that her fire recommenced, when, by possibility, the shot could only reach the Serapis through the Richard. Ten or twelve men appear to have been killed and wounded on the forecastle of the latter ship, which was crowded at the time, and among them was an officer of the name of Caswell, who, with his dying breath, maintained that he had received his wound by the fire of the friendly vessel.

After crossing the bows of the Richard, and the stern of the Serapis, delivering grape as she passed, the Alliance ran off to leeward, again standing off and on, doing nothing, for the remainder of the combat.

The fire of the Alliance added greatly to the leaks of the Richard, which ship, by this time, had received so much water through the shot-holes, as to begin to settle. It is even affirmed by many witnesses, that the most dangerous shot-holes on board the Richard, were under her larboard bow, and larboard counter, in places where they could not have been received from the fire of the Serapis. This evidence, however, is not unanswerable, as it has been seen that the Serapis luffed up on the larboard-quarter of the Richard in the commenced of the action, and, forging ahead, was subsequently on her larboard bow, endeavouring to cross her fore-foot. It is certainly possible that shot may have struck the Richard in the places mentioned, on these occasions, and that, as the ship settled in the water, from other leaks, the holes then made may have suddenly increased the danger. On the other hand, if the Alliance did actually fire while

on the bow and quarter of the *Richard*, as appears by a mass of uncontradicted testimony, the dangerous shot-holes may very well have come from that ship.

Let the injuries have been received from what quarter they might, soon after the *Alliance* had run to leeward, an alarm was spread in the *Richard* that the ship was sinking. Both vessels had been on fire several times, and some difficulty had been experienced in extinguishing the flames, but here was a new enemy to contend with, and, as the information came from the carpenter, whose duty it was to sound the pump-wells, it produced a good deal of consternation. The *Richard* had more than a hundred English prisoners on board, and the master-at-arms, in the hurry of the moment, let them all up from below, in order to save their lives. In the confusion of such a scene at night, the master of the letter of marque, that had been taken off the north of Scotland, passed through a port of the *Richard* into one of the *Serapis*, when he reported to Captain Pearson, that a few minutes would probably decide the battle in his favour, or carry his enemy down, he himself having been liberated in order to save his life. Just at this instant the gunner, who had little to occupy him at his quarters, came on deck, and not perceiving Commodore Jones, or Mr. Dale, both of whom were occupied with the liberated prisoners, and believing the master, the only other superior he had in the ship, to be dead, he ran up on the poop to haul down the colours. Fortunately the flag-staff had been shot away, and, the ensign already hanging in the water, he had no other means of letting his intention to submit be known, than by calling out for quarter. Captain Pearson now hailed to inquire if the *Richard* demanded quarter, and was answered by Commodore Jones himself, in the negative. It is probable that the reply was not heard, or, if heard, supposed to come from an unauthorised source, for encouraged by what he had learned from the escaped prisoner, by the cry, and by the confusion that prevailed in the *Richard*, the English captain directed his boarders to be called away, and, as soon as mustered, they were ordered to take possession of the prize. Some of the men actually got on the gunwale of the latter ship, but finding boarders ready to repel boarders, they made a precipitate retreat. All this time, the top-men were not idle, and the enemy were soon driven below again with loss.

In the mean while, Mr. Dale, who no longer had a gun that could be fought, mustered the prisoners at the pumps, turning their consternation to account, and probably keeping the *Richard* afloat by the very blunder that had come so near losing her. The ships were now on fire again, and both parties, with the exception of a few guns on each side, ceased fighting, in order to subdue this common enemy. In the course of the combat, the *Serapis* is said to have been set on fire no less than twelve times, while, towards its close, as will be seen in the sequel, the *Richard* was burning all the while.

As soon as order was restored in the *Richard*, after the call for quarter, her chances of success began to increase, while the English, driven under cover, almost to a man, appear to have lost, in a great degree, the hope of victory. Their fire materially slackened, while

the *Richard* again brought a few more guns to bear; the main-mast of the *Serapis* began to totter, and her resistance, in general, to lessen. About an hour after the explosion, or between three hours and three hours and a half after the first gun was fired, and between two hours and two hours and a half after the ships were lashed together, Captain Pearson hauled down the colours of the *Serapis* with his own hands, the men refusing to expose themselves to the fire of the *Richard*'s tops.

As soon as it was known that the colours of the English had been lowered, Mr. Dale got upon the gunwale of the *Richard*, and laying hold of her main brace pendant, he swung himself on board the *Serapis*. On the quarter-deck of the latter he found Captain Pearson, almost alone, that gallant officer having maintained his post, throughout the whole of this close and murderous conflict. Just as Mr. Dale addressed the English captain, the first lieutenant of the *Serapis* came up from below to inquire if the *Richard* had struck, her fire having entirely ceased. Mr. Dale now gave the English officer to understand that he was mistaken in the position of things, the *Serapis* having struck to the *Richard*, and not the *Richard* to the *Serapis*. Captain Pearson confirming this account, his subordinate acquiesced, offering to go below and silence the guns that were still playing upon the American ship. To this Mr. Dale would not consent, but both the English officers were immediately passed on board the *Richard*. The firing was then stopped below. Mr. Dale had been closely followed to the quarter-deck of the *Serapis*, by Mr. Mayrant, a midshipman, and a party of boarders, and as the former struck the quarter-deck of the prize, he was run through the thigh, by a boarding-pike, in the hands of a man in the waist, who was ignorant of the surrender. Thus did the close of this remarkable combat, resemble its other features in singularity, blood being shed and shot fired, while the boarding officer was in amicable discourse with his prisoners!

As soon as Captain Pearson was on board the *Richard*, and Mr. Dale had received a proper number of hands in the prize, Commodore Jones ordered the lashings to be cut, and the vessels to be separated, hailing the *Serapis*, as the *Richard* drifted from alongside of her, and ordering her to follow his own ship. Mr. Dale now had the head sails of the *Serapis* braced sharp aback, and the wheel put down, but the vessel refused both her helm and her canvass. Surprised and excited at this circumstance, the gallant lieutenant sprang from the binnacle on which he had seated himself, and fell at his length on the deck. He had been severely wounded in the leg, by a splinter, and until this moment was ignorant of the injury! He was replaced on the binnacle, when the master of the *Serapis* came up and acquainted him with the fact that the ship was anchored.

By this time, Mr. Lunt, the second lieutenant, who had been absent in the pilot boat, had got alongside, and was on board the prize. To this officer Mr. Dale now consigned the charge of the *Serapis*, the cable was cut, and the ship followed the *Richard*, as ordered.

Although this protracted and bloody combat had now ended, neither the danger nor the labours of the victors were over. The

Richard was both sinking and on fire. The flames had got within the ceiling, and extended so far that they menaced the magazine, while all the pumps, in constant use, could barely keep the water at the same level. Had it depended on the exhausted people of the two combatants, the ship must have soon sunk, but the other vessels of the squadron sent hands on board the Richard, to assist at the pumps. So imminent did the danger from the fire become, that all the powder was got on deck, to prevent an explosion. In this manner did the night of the battle pass, with one gang always at the pumps, and another contending with the flames, until about ten o'clock in the forenoon of the 24th, when the latter were got under. After the action, eight or ten Englishmen in the Richard, stole a boat from the Serapis, and ran away with it, landing at Scarborough. Several of the men were so alarmed with the condition of their ship, as to jump overboard and swim to the other vessels.

When the day dawned, an examination was made into the situation of the Richard. Aft, on a line with those guns of the Serapis that had not been disabled by the explosion, the timbers were found to be nearly all beaten in, or beaten out, for in this respect there was little difference between the two sides of the ship; and it was said that her poop and upper decks would have fallen into the gun-room, but for a few futtocks that had been missed. Indeed, so large was the vacuum, that most of the shot fired from this part of the Serapis, at the close of the action, must have gone through the Richard without touching any thing. The rudder was cut from the sternpost, and the transoms were nearly driven out of her. All the after part of the ship, in particular, that was below the quarter-deck, was torn to pieces, and nothing had saved those stationed on the quarter-deck, but the impossibility of sufficiently elevating guns that almost touched their object.

The result of this examination was to convince every one of the impossibility of carrying the Richard into port, in the event of its coming on to blow. Commodore Jones was advised to remove his wounded while the weather continued moderate, and he reluctantly gave the order to commence. The following night and the morning of the succeeding day were employed in executing this imperious duty, and about nine o'clock, the officer of the Pallas, who was in charge of the ship, with a party at the pumps, finding that the water had reached the lower deck, reluctantly abandoned her. About ten, the Bon Homme Richard wallowed heavily, gave a roll, and settled slowly into the sea, bows foremost.

The Serapis suffered much less than the Richard, the guns of the latter having been so light, and so soon silenced; but no sooner were the ships separated, than her main-mast fell, bringing down with it the mizen-top-mast. Though jury-masts were erected, the ship drove about, nearly helpless, in the North Sea, until the 6th of October, when the remains of the squadron, with the two prizes, got into the Texel, the port to which they had been ordered to repair.

In the combat between the Richard and the Serapis, an unusual number of lives was lost, though no regular authentic report appears

to have been given by either side. Captain Pearson states the loss of the *Richard* at about 300 in killed and wounded; a total that would have included very nearly all hands, and which was certainly a great exaggeration, or at least a great mistake. According to a muster-roll of the officers and people of the *Richard*, excluding the marines, which is still in existence, 42 men were killed, or died of their wounds shortly after the battle, and 41 were wounded. This would make a total of 83, for this portion of the crew, which, on the roll amounted to 227 souls. But many of the persons named on this list are known not to have been in the action at all; such as neither of the junior lieutenants, and some thirty men that were with them, besides those absent in prizes. As there were a few volunteers on board, however, who were not mustered, if we set down 200 as the number of the portion of the regular crew that was in the action, we shall probably not be far from the truth. By estimating the soldiers that remained on board at 120, and observing the same proportion for their casualties, we shall get 49 for the result, which will make a total of 132, as the entire loss of the *Richard*. It is known, however, that, in the commencement of the action, the soldiers, or marines, suffered out of proportion to the rest of the crew, and general report having made the gross loss of the *Richard* 150 men, we are disposed to believe that it was not far from the fact.

Captain Pearson reported a part of his loss at 117 men, admitting, at the same time, that there were many killed and wounded whose names he could not discover. It is probable that the loss of men, in the two ships, was about equal, and that nearly, or quite half of all those who were engaged, were either killed or wounded. Commodore Jones, in a private letter, written some time after the occurrence, gives an opinion, however, that the loss of the *Richard* was less than that of the *Serapis*. That two vessels of so much force should lie lashed together more than two hours, making use of artillery, musketry, and all the other means of annoyance known to the warfare of the day, and not do even greater injury to the crews, strikes us with astonishment; but the fact must be ascribed to the peculiarities of the combat, which, by driving most of the English under cover so early in the battle, and by keeping the Americans above the line of fire of their enemies, in a measure protected each party from the missiles of the other. As it was, it proved a murderous and sanguinary conflict, though its duration would probably have been much shorter, and its character still more bloody, but for these unusual circumstances.*

* The writer has given the particulars of this celebrated sea-fight in detail, on account of the great interest that has always been attached to the subject, no less than from a desire to correct many of the popular errors that have so long existed in connexion with its incidents. In framing his own account, he has followed what to him have appeared to be the best authorities. Scarcely any two of the eye-witnesses agree in all their facts, but by dint of examination, the writer has been enabled to discover, as he believes, where the weight of credible testimony and probability lies, and has used it accordingly. Commodore Dale, a witness every way entitled to respect, so far as his position enabled him to note occurrences, was kind enough while living to describe to the writer the manœuvres of the ships, which it is hoped have now been given in a way that will render them intelligible to seamen. There are but two leading circumstances of this sort that, to the writer, appear doubtful. The *Alliance* thrice approached, each time firing into

CHAPTER X.

Arrival of the *Serapis* in Holland—Paul Jones takes command of the *Alliance*, and is forced to put to sea—Capt. Landais is discharged the navy—Commodore Jones in the *Ariel*, returns to America—Sketch of his life—Vote of thanks by Congress—Receives command of the *America*—Several captures by the *Deane*, Capt. Samuel Nicholson—Capture of the *Active*—Action with the *Duff*—Expedition against the British post on the *Penobscot*—Loss of all the vessels engaged therein.

THE arrival of Paul Jones, with his prizes, in Holland, excited a great deal of interest in the diplomatic world. The English demanded that the prisoners should be released, and that Jones himself should be given up as a pirate. The Dutch government, though well disposed to favour the Americans, was not prepared for war, and it was induced to temporise. A long correspondence followed, which terminated in one of those political expedients that are so common, and in which the pains and penalties of avowing the truth, are avoided by means of a mystification. The *Serapis*, which had been re-masted and equipped, was transferred to France, as was the *Scarborough*, while Commodore Jones took command of the *Alliance*, Captain Landais having been suspended, and was ordered to quit the country.

It would seem that there were two parties in Holland: that of the prince and that of the people. With the latter the American cause was popular; but the former employed an admiral at the *Texel*, who, after a vexatious course, finally succeeded in forcing the *Alliance* to put to sea, in the face of a fleet of enemies, which was anxiously awaiting her appearance. The *Alliance* went to sea on the 27th of December, 1779, and reached the roads of *Groix* again in safety, on the 10th of February, 1780. She passed down the Chan-

both the combatants; but the accounts, or rather testimony,—for there are many certificates given by the officers not only of the *Richard*, but of the *Alliance* herself, *Pallas*, &c.—is so obscure and confused, that it is difficult to get at the truth of the manner, order, and exact time in which these attacks were made. With the view to give no opinion as to the precise time of the last firing of the *Alliance*, the writer has condensed the account of all her proceedings into one, though he inclines to think that the second attack of this ship may have occurred a little later in the contest than would appear from the manner in which it is told in the narrative. The word *may* is used from uncertainty, most of the testimony, perhaps, placing the occurrence in the order of time given in the text. Captain Pearson says, or is made to say, in his official report, that the *Alliance* “kept sailing round us the whole action, and raking us fore and aft,” &c. This statement is contradicted by the formal certificates of nearly every officer in the *Richard*, by persons on board the *Alliance*, by spectators in boats, as well as by officers of the other vessels near. The first lieutenant and master of the *Alliance* herself admit that they were never on the off side of the *Serapis* at all, and of course their ship never could have gone round her. They also say that they engaged the *Scarborough*, at very long shot, for a short time; a fact that Captain Piercy of the *Scarborough*, corroborates. They add, moreover, that their ship was a long time aloof from the combat, and that she only fired three broadsides, or parts of broadsides, at the *Richard* and *Serapis*. From the testimony, there is little doubt that the *Alliance* did materially more injury to the *Richard* than to the *Serapis*; though, as Captain Pearson could not have known this fact at the time, it is highly probable that her proximity may have influenced that officer in inducing him to lower his flag.

The second point is the fact whether the *Scarborough* raked the *Richard* before she was herself engaged with the other ships. The writer is of opinion that she did, while he admits that the matter is involved in doubt.

nel, was near enough to the squadron in the Downs to examine its force, was several times chased, and made a short cruise in the Bay of Biscay, after having touched in Spain. Captain Conyngham, who had been captured in a privateer and escaped, joined the Alliance, and went round to l'Orient in the ship.

Although it will be anticipating the events of another year, we shall finish the history of this vessel, so far as she was connected with the officer who first commanded her, Captain Landais. This gentleman had been sent for to Paris, to account for his conduct to the American minister, and subsequently his claim to command the Alliance was referred to Mr. Arthur Lee, who was on the spot, and who had long been in Europe, as a conspicuous agent of the government. The decision of this commissioner restored the Alliance to Captain Landais, on the ground that his command having been given to him by the highest authority of the country, a vote of Congress, he could not legally be deprived of it by any subordinate authority. In June, Captain Landais sailed in the ship for America, where she was given to an officer better fitted to show her excellent qualities, and who, in the end, succeeded in redeeming her character. During the passage home, Captain Landais was deposed from the command, under the idea that he was insane, and soon after he was discharged from the navy. It is thought that the absence of Commodore Jones, alone, prevented his receiving severe punishment.

Commodore Jones, anxious to get back to America, took command of the *Ariel* 20, a little ship that the king of France lent to his allies, to aid in transporting military supplies; and in this vessel, with a portion of the officers and men who had belonged to the *Richard*, he sailed from under Groix on the 7th of September. When a day or two out, the *Ariel* encountered a severe gale, in which she came near being lost. The ship was so pressed upon by the wind, that her lower yard-arms frequently dipped, and though an anchor was let go, she refused to tend to it. In order to keep her from foundering, the fore-mast was cut away, and the heel of the main-mast having worked out of the step, that spar followed, bringing down with it the mizen-mast.

Returning to l'Orient to refit, the *Ariel* sailed a second time for America, on the 18th of December. During the passage, she fell in with an enemy of about her own size, in the night, and after much conversation, a short combat followed, when the English ship intimated that she had struck, but taking advantage of her position, she made sail and escaped. Some unaccountable mistake was made by, or an extraordinary hallucination appears to have come over, Commodore Jones, in reference to this affair, for, in his journal, he speaks of his enemy as having been an English twenty-gun ship called the *Triumph*, and the result as a victory. The *Triumph*, if such was truly the name of the English ship, was probably a letter of marque, unable to resist a vessel of war of any force, and though not free from the imputation of treachery, she escaped by out-maneuvring the *Ariel*.* On the 18th of February, 1781, after an

* Private communication of the late Commodore Dale, to the writer.

absence of more than three years, Paul Jones reached Philadelphia in safety.*

Before we return to the American seas, and to the more regular incidents of the year 1779, we will add that, after an inquiry into the conduct of Captain Jones, as it was connected with all his proceedings in Europe, Congress gave him a vote of thanks, and, by a

* John Paul was born on the 6th of July, 1747, at Arbigland, on the Frith of Solway, in the kingdom of Scotland. His father was the gardener of Mr. Craik, a gentleman of that vicinity. At the age of twelve, the boy was apprenticed to a ship-master in the Virginia trade, and he made his appearance in America, in consequence, when in his thirteenth year. An elder brother had married and settled in Virginia, and from this time young Paul appears to have had views of the same sort. The failure of his master induced him to give up the indentures of the apprentice, and we soon find the latter on board a slave. The master and mate of the vessel he was in, dying, Paul took charge of her, and brought her into port; and from that time he appears to have sailed in command. About the year 1770, he caused a man named Mungo Maxwell to be flogged for misconduct, and the culprit made a complaint of ill-treatment, menacing a prosecution. The complaint was rejected by the local authorities (West Indies) as frivolous; but, not long after, Maxwell went to sea in another ship, and died rather suddenly. When the fact became known, the enemies of Paul circulated a report that the death of this man was owing to the ill-treatment he had received when punished by his former commander. Although this rumour was completely disproved in the end, it raised a prejudice against the young seaman, and, at a later day, when he became conspicuous, it was used against him, for political effect, by those who ought to have been superior to injustice of so low a character.

Mr. Paul was soured at this ill-treatment, and, in a manner abandoned his native country. In 1773, his brother died, and he went to Virginia to settle, with the intention of quitting the seas. Here, for some reason that is unknown, he added the name of Jones to his two others. The hostilities of 1775, however, brought him forward again, and he was the senior lieutenant ever commissioned regularly, in the service of Congress. As this was before the declaration of independence, the relative rank was not established; but in October, 1776, his name appears on the list as the eighteenth captain.

His first cruise was in the *Alfred* 24, Captain Saltonstall, the ship that bore the broad pennant of Commodore Hopkins, and his first engagement was that with the *Glasgow*. From the *Alfred*, he was transferred to the sloop *Providence* 12, as her captain. He then commanded the *Alfred* 24. In 1777 he was appointed to the *Ranger* 18, a crank, clumsy ship, with a gun-deck, but no armament above, and a dull sailer. In 1778, after the cruise in the Irish Channel, in which he took the *Drake*, he gave up the command of the *Ranger*, and in 1779, obtained that of the squadron, under the celebrated *concordat*. His subsequent movements are to be traced in the text.

In 1782, Captain Jones was launched in the *America* 74, and the same day delivered her up to the *Chevalier de Martigue*, the late commander of the *Magnifique*, the ship she was now to replace. After this he made a cruise in the French fleet, as a volunteer, in which situation he was found by the peace. In November, 1783, he sailed for France with a commission to negotiate for the recovery of prize-money in different parts of Europe. In 1787 he came to America on business, but returned to Europe in the course of the same season. He now went to the north on business connected with his prizes. About this time he received some proposals to enter the Russian navy, and in the spring of 1788 he obtained the rank of rear-admiral accordingly. Shortly after he was placed in an important command against the Turks, in which situation he is said to have rendered material services. But personal hostility drove him from Russia in 1789. He returned to Paris, retaining his rank, and pensioned. From this time he remained in France and the adjacent countries of Europe, until his death, which occurred at Paris, on the 18th of July, 1792. A commission appointing him the agent of the American government to treat with Algiers, arrived after he was dead.

That Paul Jones was a remarkable man, cannot be justly questioned. He had a respectable English education, and, after his ambition had been awakened by success, he appears to have paid attention to the intellectual parts of his profession. In his enterprises are to be discovered much of that boldness of conception that marks a great naval captain, though his most celebrated battle is probably the one in which he evinced no other very high quality than that of an invincible resolution to conquer. Most of the misfortunes of the *Bon Homme Richard*, however, may be very fairly attributed to the insubordination of his captains, and to the bad equipment of his own vessel. The expedition of running the *Serapis* aboard was one like himself, and it was the only chance of victory that was left.

Paul Jones was a man rather under than above the middle size, and his countenance has been described as possessing much of that sedateness which marks deep enthusiasm.

formal resolution, bestowed on him the command of the *America* 74, the only one of the six ships of that class that was ever laid down under the law of 1776. In order to dispose of this branch of the subject at once, it may be well to say here, that the *America* never got to sea under the national colours, Congress presenting the ship to their ally, Louis XVI., to replace the *Magnifique* 74, which had been lost in the port of Boston. This friendly offering was made by resolution, September the 3d, 1782, and it being now near the end of the war, Paul Jones never got to sea again in the service. In consequence of the *America's* having been presented to France, while still on the stocks, the United States properly possessed no two-decked ship during the war of the Revolution.

To return to the more regular order of events.

During the summer of 1779, the *Deane* 32, Captain Samuel Nicholson, and the *Boston* 24, Captain Tucker, made a cruise in company. In August of that year, these two ships took many prizes, though no action of moment occurred. Among those were the *Sandwich*, (a packet,) 16, two privateers, with the *Glencairn* 20, and the *Thorn* 15. The two last vessels were letters of marque.

In the spring of this year, the *Providence* 12, Captain Hacker, took a vessel of equal force, called the *Diligent*, after a sharp action. The particulars of this engagement are lost, though they are known to have been highly creditable to the American officer. The *Diligent* appears to have been taken into the service.

A bloody action also occurred, about the same time, between the Massachusetts state cruiser *Hazard* 14, Captain John Foster Williams, and the *Active* 18, a vessel that is supposed to have belonged to the king. The combat lasted half an hour, and was determined in favour of the *Hazard*. The *Active* is said to have had 33 killed and wounded, and the *Hazard* 8. Shortly after this handsome affair, Captain Williams was appointed to the ship *Protector* 20, belonging to the same state, and in June he had a severe action with one of those heavy letters of marque, it was so much the custom to

There is no doubt that his eminence arose from the force of his convictions, rather than from his power of combining, though his reasoning faculties were respectable. His associations in Paris appear to have awakened a taste which, whenever it comes late in life, is almost certain to come attended with exaggeration. Personally he would seem to have been vain; a very excusable foible in one of his education and previous habits, that was suddenly exposed to the flattery and seductions of Parisian society. He never married, though he was not averse to the sex, as appears from his letters, poetic effusions, and gallantries. An affectation of a literary taste, that expended itself principally in homage to those he admired, formed indeed one of his principal weaknesses.

In battle, Paul Jones was brave; in enterprise, hardy and original; in victory, mild and generous; in motives, much disposed to disinterestedness, though ambitious of renown and covetous of distinction; in his pecuniary relations, liberal; in his affections, natural and sincere; and in his temper, except in those cases which assailed his reputation, just and forgiving. He wanted the quiet self-respect of a man capable of meeting acts of injustice with composure and dignity; and his complaints of ill-treatment and neglect, for which there was sufficient foundation, probably lost him favour both in France and America. Had circumstances put him in a situation of high command, there is little doubt that he would have left a name unsurpassed by that of any naval captain, or have perished in endeavouring to obtain it.

From the American government, Paul Jones received many proofs of commendation. Louis XVI. created him a knight of the order of Merit. and Catharine of Russia conferred on him the riband of St. Anne. He also received other marks of distinction, with a pension from Denmark.

send to sea, at the period of which we are writing, called the *Duff*; a ship said to have been quite equal in force to the *Protector*. After a sharp contest of more than an hour, the *Duff* blew up. The *Protector* succeeded in saving 55 of her crew, having had 6 of her own people killed and wounded in the battle. Taking and manning many prizes, the *Protector* had a narrow escape from capture, by falling in with the enemy's frigate *Thames* 32, from which ship, however, she escaped, after a sharp running fight, in which the *Thames* was much crippled aloft. On returning to port, Captain Williams, who bore a high reputation as an officer and a seaman, was immediately engaged in the expedition that it is our duty to record next, and which proved to be much the most disastrous affair in which American seamen were ever engaged.

The enemy having established a post on the *Penobscot*, and placed a strong garrison in it, the State of Massachusetts determined to drive them from its territory, without calling upon Congress for assistance. As the country was then nearly a wilderness, it is probable a feeling of pride induced this step, it being worthy of remark, that after General Gage was expelled from Boston, the enemy had, in no instance, attempted to maintain any other post than this, which lay on a remote and uninhabited frontier, within the territories of New England. For this purpose, Massachusetts made a draft of 1500 of her own militia, and got an order for the U. S. ship *Warren* 32, Captain Saltonstall, the *Diligent* 14, Captain Brown, and the *Providence* 12, Captain Hacker, to join the expedition; these being the only regular cruisers employed on the occasion. Three vessels belonging to Massachusetts were also put under the orders of Captain Saltonstall, and a force consisting of thirteen privateers was added. In addition there were many transports and store-vessels. General Lovel commanded the brigade.

This armament made its appearance off the *Penobscot* on the 25th of July. While the militia were making their descent, the *Warren*, and another vessel of some force, engaged the enemy's works. The cannonading was severe, and the *Warren* is said to have had 30 men killed and wounded, in the action with the batteries, and in landing the troops. The latter duty, however, was successfully performed by General Lovel, with a loss of about a hundred men, including all arms. Finding it impossible to carry the place with his present force, the commanding officer now sent for reinforcements. On the 13th of August, while waiting for a return of the messenger, information was received from the *Tyrannicide*, the look-out vessel, that Sir George Collier, in the *Rainbow* 44, accompanied by four other vessels of war, was entering the bay. The troops immediately re-embarked, and a general, hurried and confused flight ensued. The British squadron, consisting of five vessels of war, quickly appeared, and a pursuit up the river was commenced, and continued for a long distance. The enemy soon got near enough to use their chase guns, and the fire was returned by the Americans. It was undoubtedly the wish of Captain Saltonstall, to reach the shallow water before he was overtaken, but find-

ing this impracticable, he run his ship ashore, and set her on fire. Others followed this example, and most of the vessels were destroyed, though three or four fell into the hands of the enemy.

Captain Saltonstall was much, and, in some respects, perhaps, justly censured, for this disaster, though it is to be feared that it arose more from that habit of publicity, which is peculiar to all countries much influenced by popular feeling, than from any other cause. Had a due regard been paid to secrecy, time might have been gained in that remote region, to effect the object, before a sufficient force could be collected to go against the assailants. In a military sense, the principal faults appeared to have been a miscalculation of means, at the commencement, and a neglect to raise such batteries, as might have protected the shipping against the heavy vessels of the enemy. It could not surely have been thought that privateers, armed with light guns, were able to resist two-deckers, and the fact, that the English had a fleet of such vessels on the coast was generally known. The Warren, the largest vessel among the Americans, was a common frigate of thirty-two guns, and had a main-deck battery of twelve-pounders. Whatever might have been attempted by a regular force, was put out of the question by the insubordination of the privateers-men, each vessel seeking her own safety, as her captain saw best.

The troops and seamen that landed, found themselves in the centre of a wilderness, and taking different directions, their sufferings, before they reached their settlements, were of the severest kind. It is a fact, worthy of being recorded, that, on this occasion, the Warren being short of men at the commencement of the expedition, and finding it difficult to obtain them by enlistment, in consequence of the sudden demand for seamen, Captain Saltonstall made up the deficiency by impressment.

The disastrous result of this expedition inflicted a severe blow on American nautical enterprises. Many privateers and state vessels, that had been successful against the enemy's commerce, were either captured or destroyed. Among the vessels blown up, was the Providence 12, one of the first cruisers ever sent to sea by the United States, and which had become noted for exploits greatly exceeding her force. As far as can now be ascertained, we find reason to believe, that this little cruiser was both sloop-rigged and brig-rigged, in the course of her service. She had been a privateer out of Rhode Island, at the commencement of the war, and was bought of her original commander, Captain Whipple,* who was himself admitted into the service, as the first commander of the Columbus 20, and who subsequently was numbered as the twelfth captain, on the regulated list of 1776.

* This officer is supposed to have commanded at the burning of the Gaspé in 1772.

CHAPTER XI.

Attack on and reduction of Charleston—Capture of the Boston—the Providence—the the Queen of France—and the Ranger—Action between the Trumbull and the letter of marque Watt—The Saratoga, Capt. Young, captures the Charming Molly and two brigs—they are retaken by the Intrepid—the Saratoga founders at sea—The Alliance, Capt. John Barry, captures the Alert, Mars, and Minerva—her action with and capture of the Atalanta and Trepassy—action off Havanna—The Confederacy captured by the British—Action with the Iris and loss of the Trumbull—Sketch of Capt. James Nicholson—Capture of the Savage by the Congress, Capt. Geddes—Three sloops of war and several cruisers, captured by the Deane, Capt. Nicholson.

AT the commencement of the year 1780, the French fleet under Comte d'Estaing retired to the West Indies, leaving the entire American coast, for a time, at the command of the British. Sir Henry Clinton profited by the opportunity to sail against Charleston, with a strong force in ships and troops, which town he reduced after a short but vigorous siege. Several American ships of war were in the harbour at the time, under the command of Captain Whipple, and finding escape impossible, this officer carried his squadron into the Cooper, sunk several vessels at its mouth, and landed all the guns and crews, for the defence of the town, with the exception of those of one ship. The Providence 28, Captain Whipple, the Queen of France 28,* Captain Rathburne, the Boston 24, Captain Tucker, the Ranger 18, Captain Simpson, and several smaller vessels, fell into the hands of the enemy.

The English government, by this time, found the system of privateering so destructive to their navigation, that it had come to the determination of refusing to exchange any more of the seamen that fell into their power. By acting on this policy, they collected a large body of prisoners, sending them to England in their return ships, and sensibly affected the nautical enterprises of the Americans, who, of course, had but a limited number of officers and men fit to act on the ocean.

By the fall of Charleston, too, the force of the regular American marine, small as it had always been, was still more reduced. Of the frigates, the Alliance 32, the Hague (late Deane) 32, Confederacy 32, Trumbull 28, and a ship or two bought or borrowed in Europe, appear to be all that were left, while the smaller cruisers, like the pitcher that is broken by going too oftento the well, had not fared much better.

In consequence of all these losses, the advanced state of the war, and the French alliance, which had brought the fleets of France upon the American coast, Congress appears to have thought any great efforts for increasing the marine unnecessary at the moment. The privateers and state cruisers were out and active as usual, though much reduced in numbers, and consequently in general efficiency. In contrast to these diminished efforts we find the British

* This ship is supposed to have been a small frigate built at Nantes, by the American commissioners in France.

Parliament authorising the ministry to keep no less than 85,000 men employed in the English navy, including the marines.

The first action of moment that occurred this year between any United States' vessel and the enemy, notwithstanding, has the reputation of having been one of the most hotly and obstinately contested combats of the war. June 2d, 1780, the *Trumbull* 28, then under the command of Captain James Nicholson, the senior officer of the navy, while cruising in lat. $35^{\circ} 54'$, long. $66^{\circ} W.$, made a strange sail to windward from the mast-heads. The *Trumbull* immediately furled all her canvass, in the hope of drawing the stranger down upon her before she should be seen. At eleven, the stranger was made out to be a large ship, steering for the *Trumbull's* quarter; but soon hauling more astern, sail was got on the American ship to close. After some manœuvring, in order to try the rate of sailing and to get a view of the stranger's broadside, the *Trumbull* took in her light sails, hauled up her courses, the chase all this time betraying no desire to avoid an action, but standing directly for her adversary. When near enough, the *Trumbull* filled, and outsailing the stranger, she easily fetched to windward of her. The chase now fired three guns, showed English colours, and edged away, under short sail, evidently with an intention to pursue her course.

Captain Nicholson harangued his men, and then made sail to bring his ship up with the enemy. When about a hundred yards distant, the English ship fired a broadside, and the action began in good earnest. For two hours and a half the vessels lay nearly abeam of each other, giving and receiving broadsides without intermission. At no time were they half a cable's length asunder, and more than once the yards nearly interlocked. Twice was the *Trumbull* set on fire by the wads of her enemy, and once the enemy suffered in the same way. At last the fire of the Englishman slackened sensibly, until it nearly ceased.

Captain Nicholson now felt satisfied that he should make a prize of his antagonist, and was encouraging his people with that hope, when a report was brought to him, that the main-mast was tottering, and that if it went while near the enemy, his ship would probably be the sacrifice. Anxious to secure the spar, sail was made, and the *Trumbull* shot ahead again, her superiority of sailing being very decided. She was soon clear of her adversary, who made no effort to molest her. The vessels, however, were scarcely musket-shot apart, when the main and mizen top-masts of the *Trumbull* went over the side, and, in spite of every effort to secure them, spar after spar came down, until nothing was left but the fore-mast. Under such circumstances, the enemy, who manifested no desire to profit by her advantage, went off on her proper course. Before she went out of sight, her main top-mast also, was seen to fall.

It was afterwards ascertained that the ship engaged by the *Trumbull* was a letter of marque called the *Watt*, Captain Coulthard, a vessel of size, that had been expressly equipped to fight her way. Her force is not mentioned in the English accounts, but her commander, in his narrative of the affair, in which he claims the victory,

admits his loss to have been 92 men, in killed and wounded. Captain Nicholson estimated her force at 34 or 36 guns, mostly twelve-pounders; and he states that of the Trumbull to have been 24 twelve-pounders and 6 sixes, with 199 souls on board when the action commenced. The Trumbull lost 39, in killed and wounded, among the former of whom were two of her lieutenants.

In the way of a regular cannonade, this combat is generally thought to have been the severest that was fought in the war of the Revolution. There is no question of the superiority of the Watt in every thing but sailing, she having been essentially the largest and strongest ship, besides carrying more guns and men than her opponent. Owing to the difficulty of obtaining seamen, which has been so often mentioned, the Trumbull's crew was composed, in a great degree, of raw hands, and Captain Nicholson states particularly that many of his people were suffering under sea-sickness when they went to their guns.

This action was not followed by another, of any importance, in which a government cruiser was concerned, until the month of October, when the U. S. sloop of war *Saratoga 16*, Captain Young, fell in with, and captured a ship and two brigs, the former, and one of the latter of which, were well armed. The conflict with the ship, which was called the *Charming Molly*, was conducted with a spirit and promptitude that are deserving of notice. Running alongside, Captain Young delivered his fire, and threw fifty men on the enemy's decks, when a fierce but short struggle ensued, that ended in the capture of the British ship. Lieutenant Barney, afterwards so distinguished in the service, led the boarders on this occasion; and the crew that he overcame is said to have been nearly double in numbers to his own party.

After making these and other captures, the *Saratoga* made sail for the Capes of the Delaware, with the intention of conveying her prize into port. The following day, however, the convoy was chased by the *Intrepid 74*, Captain Molloy, which ship retook all the prizes, but was unable to get the *Saratoga* under her guns. It is said, and we find no evidence to contradict it, that the *Saratoga* never returned to port, the vessel foundering, and her crew perishing at sea, unheard of.

The brevity of the regular naval annals of the three last years of the war, compels us to compress their incidents into a single chapter, as it is our aim, except in extraordinary instances, not to blend the exploits of the private armed ships with those of the public cruisers.

It has been stated already that Captain Landais was dismissed from the service soon after his return home, when the command of the *Alliance 32* was given to Captain John Barry, the officer who had made so gallant a resistance in the *Raleigh*, not long previously. In February, 1781, Captain Barry sailed from Boston for France, in command of this favourite ship, with Colonel Laurens on board, which well known and much regretted young officer was charged with an important mission to the French court. The crew of the frigate was so indifferent, however, that Barry thought he risked his reputation

by putting to sea with it. On the outward passage, the *Alliance* captured a small privateer called the *Alert*, but no event of any moment occurred. After landing Mr. Laurens, the frigate sailed from l'Orient on a cruise, with the *Marquis de la Fayette* 40, bound to America with stores, in company. Three days afterwards, or on the 2d of April, 1781, they fell in with and captured two Guernsey privateers, one of which, the *Mars*, is said to have been a heavy vessel of 26 guns and 112 men, and the other, the *Minerva*, to have had an armament of 10 guns, and a crew of 55 souls. Neither of these cruisers appears to have made any resistance.

After this success, the *Alliance* parted company with her consort and the prizes, and continued to cruise until the 28th of May, when she made two sail, that were standing directly for her. It was late in the day, and the strangers, when near enough to remain in sight during the darkness, hauled up on the same course with the *Alliance*, evidently with a view to defer the action until morning. At daylight on the succeeding day, it was nearly a dead calm, and when the mist cleared away, the two strangers were seen at no great distance, with English colours flying. They were now distinctly made out to be a sloop of war that rated 16 guns, and a brig of 14. The sea was perfectly smooth, and there being no wind, the two light cruisers were enabled to sweep up, and to select their positions, while the *Alliance* lay almost a log on the water, without steerage way. Owing to these circumstances, it was noon before the vessels were near enough to hail, when the action commenced. For more than an hour the *Alliance* fought to great disadvantage, the enemy having got on her quarters, where only a few of the aftermost guns would bear on them. The advantage possessed by the English vessels, in consequence of the calm, at one time, indeed gave their people the greatest hopes of success, for they had the fight principally to themselves. While things were in this unfortunate state, Captain Barry received a grape-shot through his shoulder, and was carried below. This additional and disheartening calamity added to the disadvantages of the Americans, who were suffering under the close fire of two spirited and persevering antagonists. Indeed, so confident of success did the enemy now appear to be, that when the ensign of the *Alliance* was shot away, this fact, coupled with the necessary slackness of her fire, induced their people to quit their guns, and give three cheers for victory. This occurred at a moment when a light breeze struck the *Alliance's* sails, and she came fairly under steerage way. A single broadside from a manageable ship changed the entire state of the combat, and sent the enemy to their guns, again, with a conviction that their work yet remained to be done. After a manly resistance, both the English vessels, in the end, were compelled to haul down their colours.

The prizes proved to be the *Atalanta* 16, Captain Edwards, with a crew of 130 men, and the *Trepassy* 14, Captain Smith, with a crew of 80 men. Both vessels were much cut up, and they sustained a joint loss of 41 men in killed and wounded. The *Alliance* did not escape with impunity, having had 11 killed and 21 wounded, pri-

cipally by the fire of her enemies, while they lay on her quarter and across her stern. Captain Barry made a cartel of the *Trepassy*, and sent her into an English port with the prisoners, but the *Atalanta* was retaken by the enemy's squadron that was cruising off Boston, while attempting to enter that harbour.

Fortune now became capricious, and we are compelled to present the other side of the picture. Among the ships built late in the war, was the *Confederacy* 32. This vessel had been launched in 1778, at, or near Norwich, in Connecticut, and the command of her was given to Captain Seth Harding, the officer who was in the *Defence* 14, in the action in Nantasket Roads with the two transports captured in 1776. Captain Harding had been commissioned in the navy, in which his first command appears to have been this ship. The *Confederacy* sailed for Europe in 1779, with Mr. Jay, the minister to Spain, on board, and was suddenly dismasted, a little to the eastward of Bermuda. Spar followed spar, in this calamity, until the ship lay a log on the water, with even her bowsprit gone. This misfortune must probably be attributed, like so many similar, that have succeeded it, to the rigging's having slackened, after having been set up in cold weather at home, when the ship got into a warm latitude.

After several anxious weeks, the *Confederacy* got into Martinique, where Mr. Jay obtained a passage in the French frigate *l'Aurore*, and the American vessel remained to refit. From that time to the commencement of the present year, the *Confederacy* was employed, like most of the large vessels of the service, in that stage of the war, in keeping open the communications between the country and the different ports where supplies were obtained, and in transporting stores. Early in 1781, she went to Cape François, and, on the 22d of June, while on her return, with clothing and other supplies on board, and with a convoy in charge, she was chased by a large ship, which succeeded in getting alongside of her. Captain Harding had gone to quarters, and was about to open his fire, when the enemy ran out a lower tier of guns, and a frigate being in company a short distance astern, she struck. Several of the convoy were also taken.

The British stated the armament of the *Confederacy* to have been, when taken, 28 twelves, and 8 sixes, or 36 guns. Quitting this unlucky vessel, we shall now return to the only other frigate that was built in Connecticut, during the war.

Captain Nicholson continued in command of the *Trumbull*, after his severe conflict with the *Watt*, and we find him at sea again in that ship, in the summer of 1781. She left the Delaware on the 8th of August, with a crew short of 200 men, of which near 50 were of the questionable materials to be found among the prisoners of war. She had a convoy of twenty-eight sail, and a heavy privateer was in company. Off the Capes, the *Trumbull* made three British cruisers astern. Two of the enemy, one of which was a frigate, stood for the *Trumbull*, which ship, by hauling up, was enabled to gain the wind of them. Night was near, and it blew heavily. The merchantmen began to diverge from the course, though, by carrying easy sail, the

Trumbull was enabled to keep most of them ahead, and in their stations. While standing on in this manner, hoping every thing from the darkness, a squall carried away the Trumbull's fore-top-mast, which, in falling brought down with it the main-top-gallant mast. As the weather was thick and squally, the vessels in company of the Trumbull took advantage of the obscurity and scattered, each making the best of her way, according to her particular rate of sailing. The Trumbull herself was compelled to bear up, in order to carry the canvass necessary to escape, but with the wreck over her bows, and a crew that was not only deficient in numbers, but which was raw, and in part disaffected, her situation became in the last degree embarrassing. Indeed, her condition has been described as being so peculiarly distressing, as almost to form an instance of its own, of the difficulties that sometimes accompany naval warfare.

About 10 o'clock at night, the British frigate *Iris** 32, one of the vessels in chase, closed with the Trumbull, which ship, on account of the heaviness of the weather, had not yet been able to clear the wreck. In the midst of rain and squalls, in a tempestuous night, with most of the forward hamper of the ship over her bows, or lying on the fore-castle, with one of the arms of the fore-topsail yard run through her fore-sail, and the other jammed on deck, and with a disorganised crew, Captain Nicholson found himself compelled to go to quarters, or to strike without resistance. He preferred the first, but the English volunteers, instead of obeying order, went below, extinguished the lights, and secreted themselves. Near half of the remainder of the people imitated this example, and Captain Nicholson could not muster fifty of even the diminished crew he had, at the guns. The battle that followed, might almost be said to have been fought by the officers. These brave men, sustained by a party of the petty officers and seamen, managed a few of the guns, for more than an hour, when the *General Monk* 18, coming up, and joining in the fire of the *Iris*, the Trumbull submitted.

In this singular combat, it has even been asserted that at no time were 40 of the Trumbull's people at their quarters. It was probably owing to this circumstance that her loss was so small, for the ship herself is said to have been extensively cut up. She had five men killed and eleven wounded. Among the latter were two of the lieutenants, and Mr. Alexander Murray, a gentleman of Maryland, who had been educated to the seas, and had been in the action with the *Watt*, but who was then serving as a volunteer, and who, after commanding several private cruisers, entered the navy, and subsequently died at the head of the service in 1821. Mr. Murray was particularly distinguished in this affair, and the conduct of Captain Nicholson†

* The *Iris* had been the United States' ship *Hancock* 32, Captain Manly, and was captured by the *Rainbow* 44, sir George Collier, with the *Victor* 16, in sight, and *Flora* 32, in chase of her prize, the *Fox*. The *Hancock*, or *Iris*, proved to be one of the fastest ships on the American station, and made the fortunes of all who commanded her. Captain Manly is thought to have lost her, in consequence of having put her out of trim, by starting her water, while chased. The ship in the end, fell into the hands of the French in the West Indies.

† As the family of Captain Nicholson may be said to be naval, it is due to our subject to give some account of it. The ancestor of this officer emigrated from Berwick-upon-

met with much applause. The *Iris* suffered more than could have been expected under such circumstances, and reported seven men killed and wounded.

As affording some relief to the loss of the *Trumbull*, we now come to a handsome exploit that occurred soon after, which ought, perhaps, properly, to take its place among the deeds of the private cruisers, but which is of sufficient importance to be mentioned here, and this so much the more, as a portion of those engaged belonged to the regular service of the country. A private cruiser called the *Congress* had been fitted out in Philadelphia, in the course of the summer, and in September she was cruising on the coast of the Carolinas and Georgia. The *Congress* had an armament of 20 guns, according to the American accounts, and of 24 according to the English, and she was commanded by Captain Geddes. Few of her people were seamen, of which there was now a great scarcity in the country, but her complement was, in a great degree, made up of landmen.

On the morning of the 6th of September, cruising to the eastward of Charleston, the *Congress* made a sail, to which she gave chase. The stranger was soon discovered to be a cruiser, and at first, showed

Tweed, at the commencement of the eighteenth century, and established himself in Maryland, where he obtained a grant called Nicholson's Manor, near the passage through the Blue Ridge which is still known as Nicholson's Gap. This property was subsequently sold, and an estate was purchased on the Eastern Shore, where James Nicholson was born in 1737.

James Nicholson was the second son of a numerous family, and he was sent to England for his education. He returned home young, however, and chose the sea as a profession. In 1762, in common with many Americans, he assisted at the siege of the Havana. In 1763, he married.

When the war broke out, in 1775, Mr. Nicholson was residing on the Eastern Shore, and he was immediately appointed to the command of a vessel called the *Defence*, that was equipped by the Colony of Maryland, and in which cruiser he was active and useful. His appointment as captain of the *Virginia* 28, took place June 6th, 1776, and when the rank was arranged on the 10th of October, of the same year, he was put at the head of the list of captains. At this time Commodore Hopkins was commander-in-chief, but when he was dismissed, Captain Nicholson became the senior officer of the navy; a station that he held to its dissolution.

The *Virginia* being blockaded, Captain Nicholson and his crew joined the army under Washington, and were present, in the darkest moment of the war, at the battle of Trenton. The manner in which the *Virginia* was lost has been related.

The two battles fought by Commodore Nicholson while in command of the *Trumbull* 28, were sanguinary and hotly contested. In both cases the crews were, in a great degree, composed of landmen; and in the last action, none but a man of the highest notions of military honour would have thought resistance necessary. To say nothing of the condition of his ship, the *Iris* (Hancock) was one of the largest frigates built by the Americans in the Revolution, and the *Trumbull* was one of the smallest. The *Monk* was a heavy sloop of war, for that day, as is known from her subsequently falling into the hands of the Americans.

Commodore Nicholson was not exchanged until near the close of the war, and there being no ship for him, he never went to sea again in service. He subsequently settled in New York, where he held a respectable civil appointment under the general government. He died September 2d, 1804, leaving a son and three daughters, one of the latter of whom married Albert Gallatin, ex-secretary of the treasury. &c. &c. &c.

Samuel and John, the brothers of James Nicholson, were both captains in the Navy of the Revolution, and the former died at the head of the service, in 1811. Commodore S. Nicholson had four sons in the navy, and his brother John, three. Indeed, the third generation of this family, as in the case of the Perrys, are now in the service. In the whole, fifteen gentlemen of this name and family have served since 1775, of whom two have actually worn broad pennants, and a third died just as he was about to be appointed to one. In addition, several officers of distinction were near relatives, Commodore Murray having been a cousin-german of Commodore Nicholson, and Captain Gordon his nephew.

a disposition to engage, but, after some manœuvring he stood off. At half past ten the Congress began to fire her bow guns, and at eleven being close up on the enemy's quarter, she opened a heavy fire of musketry, which did a good deal of execution. Drawing ahead, the Congress now delivered her broadside, and it was returned with spirit. At first the enemy got a cross fire upon the Congress, and the latter ship meeting with an accident, fell astern to refit. But soon closing again, the combat was renewed with fresh vigour, and the Congress having got her enemy fairly under her guns, in less than an hour she left her a nearly unmanageable wreck on the water. Notwithstanding his condition, the Englishman showed no disposition to submit, and the Congress ran so close alongside, that the men were said to be reciprocally burned by the discharges of the guns. The quarter-deck and fore-castle of the enemy had scarcely a man left on it, and his fire began to slacken in consequence of several of his guns having been dismounted. In this stage of the engagement shot were even thrown by hand and did execution. At length the mizen-mast of the English ship fell, and the main-mast threatening to follow it, her boatswain appeared on the fore-castle, with his hat in his hand, and called out that his commander had struck. The prize proved to be the British sloop of war *Savage* 16, Captain Sterling.

The accounts of the respective force of the vessels engaged in this warm contest, differ essentially; and, as is usual in such matters, it is probable that the truth lies between them. There is little question of the superiority of the Congress in guns, metal, and men; but when it is remembered that the conqueror was a private armed ship, with a raw crew, and that the captured vessel was a regular cruiser that had been long actively employed, it would not be just to withhold from Captain Geddes and his people, the credit of having performed a handsome naval exploit. As in other things, there is a discrepancy also in the account of the losses of the two ships. The Congress is said, by Captain Sterling, to have had about fifty men killed and wounded; and by the American accounts, to have lost only thirty. The former makes the loss of the *Savage* eight killed, and twenty-four wounded; while the Americans raise it as high as a total of fifty-four. There is a reason to question the accuracy of the published English account of this affair, to be found in the fact that Captain Sterling, while he does not state that he was short-handed, tells us that he had but forty men left at their quarters when he struck. By adding this number to the thirty-two killed, or disabled by wounds, we get a total of but seventy-two for the crew of a frigate-built sloop of war, a fact that requires explanation to receive credit, and which, if true, would have so fairly entered into the relation of the defeat, as an extenuating circumstance. Official accounts of defeats so often undergo changes and mutilations between the hands of the writer and their publication, that we are not necessarily to attribute wilful misrepresentation to a gallant but unfortunate officer, because the documents laid before the world do not always rigidly coincide with probability, or the truth as it has been derived from other sources. The *Savage* was re-captured by a British frigate, and taken into Charles-

ton. Captain Geddes got much credit for this affair ; and, at a later day, we find his name among those of the captains of the navy.

We have now reached the year 1782, which was virtually the last of the war of the Revolution, though some events will remain to be recorded in the early part of the year 1783. In the commencement of this year, the *Deane* 32, made a successful cruise, in which she took several private armed vessels of the enemy. By some accounts, three of her prizes were sloops of war, viz. the *Regulator* 18, the *Swallow* 16, and the *Jackall* 14 ; but we think it probable, that there may have been some mistake as to their characters. On this occasion, the *Deane* was commanded by Captain Samuel Nicholson.

The favourite ship, the *Alliance** 32, Captain Barry, was much employed this year, her superior sailing making her a vessel in constant demand. Among other services that she performed, this ship was sent to the Havana for specie, whence she sailed, in company with the *Louzun*, a ship loaded with supplies. Shortly after quitting port, some enemy's vessels fell in with them, and gave chase. While running from this force, a large sail was seen on the *Alliance*'s weather bow, which was soon made out to be a French 50, of two decks. Exchanging signals, and supposing that the French frigate would sustain him, Captain Barry immediately wore round and brought the leading vessel of the enemy to action ; the others manœuvring in a way to engage the attention of the fifty. The latter, however, kept her wind ; and after a sharp fight of more than half an hour, the English ship engaged with the *Alliance*, finding herself hard pushed, made signals to her consorts to join, when Captain Barry hauled off. The *Alliance* now stood for the French ship, and speaking her, it was determined to bring the enemy to action again, in company. On making sail in chase, however, it was soon found that the fifty was too dull a sailer to give the least hope of overtaking the enemy, and the attempt was abandoned.

In this action, the *Alliance* had 3 killed and 11 wounded ; while it is said that the loss of the enemy was very heavy. Some statements place the latter as high as 87 men ; but no accounts can be discovered, that give a very clear history of this affair. The English vessel engaged was the *Sibyl*, rating 20, and mounting 30 guns. She is said to have had 37 killed and more than 50 men wounded. The other vessels in company were frigates. One of the enemy, by some of the accounts, was said to be a ship of the line, and the vessel engaged by the *Alliance*, a heavy sloop of war.

The command of the *Hague*, one of the two frigates now left in the American marine, was given to Captain Manly, after her return from the cruise under Captain Nicholson ; and this officer who had virtually begun the maritime war, on the part of the United States, in a manner closed it, by an arduous and brilliant chase, in which he escaped from several of the enemy's ships in the West Indies, after being for a considerable time under the guns of a vastly superior

* One of the traditions of the service states that the *Alliance* was chased this year, by an enemy's two-decker and that she ran fifteen knots by the log, with the wind abeam. in making her escape !

force. This occurrence may be said to have brought the regular naval warfare of the United States to an end, so far as the government cruisers were concerned, peace having been made early in 1783

CHAPTER XII.

The Hyder Ally, Capt. Joshua Barney, sails with convoy down the Delaware—action with, and capture of the General Monk—he commands the Washington—Commodore Gillon goes to Europe to purchase vessels—agrees for the Indien—makes a cruise and captures ten sail—Capture of the Indien—One of the most desperate defences on record, by Capt. Murray—Close of naval events connected with the Revolution.

ALTHOUGH we have introduced a few of the prominent actions in which the privateers were concerned in this war, it has been as exceptions. Most of the accounts of such conflicts are of a questionable nature, depending principally on the rumours of the day, as they were written out for the newspapers, though it is known that many of the exploits of this description of vessels were of a brilliant kind, and every way entitled to respect. Indeed, the private cruisers of America have always had a character superior to those of other countries; a fact that is owing to the greater degree of relative respectability that is attached to the profession of a seaman in this country, than it is usual to find elsewhere, and to the circumstance that the public marine has never been sufficiently large to receive all of those who would willingly take service in it, when the nation has been engaged in war.

Privateering, in the abstract, is a profession of which reason and good morals can scarcely approve; for whatever may be its legality, its aim is to turn the waste and destruction of war, to the benefit of avarice.* But circumstances may, and in two contests that have taken place between Great Britain and the United States, these circumstances did offer so many apologies for engaging in the pursuit, as almost to raise it to the dignity of a more approved warfare. Without regular fleets, borne upon by a powerful nation that claimed to command the ocean, and unable to assail their enemy in any other manner, most of the American seamen have found themselves reduced to the necessity of choosing between idleness, during struggles that involved the dearest rights of the country, or of engaging in this mode of endeavouring to bring their enemies to terms. It is due to these brave men to say, that, as a rule, their conduct while afloat, has generally coincided with the sentiments here attributed to them; American privateering having in all ages, been very little stigmatised by acts of oppression and rapine.

In many instances, during the war of the Revolution, the private

* It is due to the American government to say, that it has unsuccessfully attempted to put a stop to this species of war, by means of negotiations

armed cruisers displayed an honourable chivalry, by engaging vessels of war, that sufficiently showed the spirit of their commanders ; and we find them nearly always ready, when occasions have offered, to quit the more peculiar occupation of assailing the enemy's commerce, in order to lend their aid in any of the regular military expeditions of the country. In short, in this war, the officer and the common man, appear equally to have passed from the deck of the public, to that of the private cruiser, knowing little difference between ships that carried the ensign of the republic, and which, in their eyes, were engaged in the same sacred cause.

As respects the service of the colonial or state cruisers, there would be less reason to regard the accounts with distrust, but their records are scattered in so many different offices, and the marines themselves were so irregular, that it is almost impossible to obtain authentic details, at this distant day. In many instances, these vessels did excellent service ; and, in addition to a few that have already been incorporated in this work, among the more regular incidents of the war, we shall add the accounts of one or two of their actions, as they have been obtained from the best authorities that now offer, considering them entitled to precedence, before we give an outline of the service performed by the private armed cruisers.

In March, 1782, the Delaware was much infested by barges and small cruisers of the enemy, which not unfrequently made prizes of vessels belonging to the Americans, as well as molesting the people who dwelt near the water. With a view to keep the navigation open against these marauders, the State of Pennsylvania determined to fit out a few cruisers at its own expense, and with such materials as could be hastily collected. With this object, a small ship called the *Hyder Ally* was purchased. So suddenly did the local government come to its resolution, that the vessel just named, when bought, had actually dropped down the river, on an outward bound voyage, loaded with flour. She was brought back, her cargo was discharged, and an armament of 16 six-pounders was put on her. So little, however, was this ship ready for war, that she had to be pierced in order to receive her guns. Indeed, so pressing was the emergency, that the merchants of Philadelphia anticipated the passage of the law to authorise the purchase and equipment of this ship, by advancing funds for that purpose ; and the act had not actually gone through all its legal forms, until after the exploit we are about to record had been performed ! The commissioners entrusted with the duty of preparing the ship, selected Lieutenant Joshua Barney, of the United States navy, as her commander, a young officer of great decision of character and personal bravery, who had already distinguished himself in subordinate stations, on board of different cruisers of the general government, but who, like so many more of the profession, was obliged frequently to choose between idleness and a service less regular than that to which he properly belonged.

A crew of 110 men was put on board the *Hyder Ally* ; and within a fortnight after he was appointed to command her, Captain Barney sailed. It was not the intention of the State of Pennsylvania,

that this ship should go to sea, but merely that she should keep the navigation of the river and bay open, and drive off privateers, and other small cruisers. On the 8th of April, the *Hyder Ally* got into the bay with a considerable convoy of outward bound merchantmen. The whole fleet had anchored in the roads off Cape May, in waiting for a wind to get to sea, when two ships and a brig, one of the former a frigate, were seen rounding the Cape, with a view to attack them. Captain Barney immediately run up a signal for the convoy to trip, and to stand up the bay again, the wind being to the southward. This order was promptly obeyed, and in a few minutes, the merchant vessels, with one exception, were running off before the wind, with every thing set that would draw, the *Hyder Ally* covering their retreat, under easy sail. The vessel that remained, endeavoured to get to sea, by hauling close round the Cape, but grounded and fell into the hands of the enemy. Another vessel got on the shoals, and was taken by a boat from the nearest of the English cruisers.

An extensive shoal, called the "Over Falls," forms two channels, in the lower part of Delaware Bay, and while the convoy passed up the easternmost of these channels, or that which is known as the "Cape May Channel," the frigate stood towards the western, which offered a better chance to head the fugitive at the point where the two united, and which had the most water. The remaining ship and the brig, stood on in the direction of the *Hyder Ally*.

It was not long before the brig, which proved to be a British privateer out of New York, called the *Fair American*, came up with the *Hyder Ally*, when the latter offered her battle. But firing a broadside, the privateer kept aloof, and continued up the bay. Captain Barney declined to return this fire, holding himself in reserve for the ship astern, a large sloop of war, which was fast coming up. When the latter got quite near, the *Hyder Ally*, which had kept close to the shoal, luffed, threw in her broadside, and immediately righting her helm, kept away again. The enemy stood boldly on, and just as his forward guns were beginning to bear, the two vessels being within pistol-shot, the *Hyder Ally* attempted to luff athwart his hawse, when the jib-boom of the English ship ran into her fore-rigging, and the two vessels got foul. It is said that Captain Barney obtained this advantage by deceiving his enemy, having given an order to port the helm, in a loud voice, when secret instructions had been given to the quarter-master at the wheel, to put his helm hard a-starboard. The *Hyder Ally* now opened a severe raking fire, and in less than half an hour from the commencement of the action, the stranger struck, the ships remaining foul of each other.

The frigate, which had not actually got into the western channel, perceiving the state of things, changed her course, with the view to get round to the combatants, and Captain Barney had no time to lose. Throwing his first lieutenant, with a party, on board the prize, he ordered her to continue up the bay, while he covered the retreat with his own ship. In the mean while, the brig had run aground above, in chase of the convoy. There is some reason to suppose

that the commander of the frigate did not know the result of the action, for he made signals to the prize, and anchored about sunset, leaving the *Hyder Ally*, which had been kept a long distance astern of the other vessels, with a view to divert his attention, to proceed to Philadelphia without further molestation.

Up to this moment, Captain Barney did not even know the name of his prize. He now made sail, however, and running alongside of her, for the first time he learned he had captured his Britannic Majesty's ship *General Monk* 18, Captain Rodgers. This vessel had formerly been the American privateer, *General Washington*, and having fallen into the power of Admiral Arbuthnot, he had taken her into the king's service, given her a new name, and promoted a favourite officer to her command. The *Monk* mounted twenty nines, and is said to have had a crew of 136 men. Captain Rodgers reported his loss at six killed, and twenty-nine wounded; but Captain Barney stated it at twenty killed, and thirty-six wounded. It is probable that the latter account is nearest the truth, as the commander of a captured vessel has not always as good an opportunity as his captor, to ascertain his own loss. The *Hyder Ally* had four killed, and eleven wounded.

This action has been justly deemed one of the most brilliant that ever occurred under the American flag. It was fought in the presence of a vastly superior force that was not engaged; and the ship taken, was in every essential respect, superior to her conqueror. The disproportion in metal, between a six-pounder and a nine-pounder, is one half; and the *Monk*, besides being a heavier and a larger ship, had the most men. Both vessels appeared before Philadelphia, a few hours after the action, bringing with them even their dead; and most of the leading facts were known to the entire community of that place.*

The steadiness with which Captain Barney protected his convoy, the gallantry and conduct with which he engaged, and the perseverance with which he covered the retreat of his prize, are all deserving of high praise. Throughout the whole affair, this officer

* A biography of the life of Captain Rodgers has appeared; and, in this work it is asserted that the armament of the *General Monk* was of nine-pound *carronades*, and that the guns were so light, that they were dismounted by the recoils. The defeat is imputed to this cause. In the subsequent action, mentioned in the text, the *Monk*, then the *General Washington*, is said to have suffered a disadvantage, in consequence of her nines being sixes bored out to the former caliber, the guns not having weight enough to bear the recoil. This is a professional fact, that might well enough occur. It is, therefore, probable that, when taken, the *Monk* had these same nines, and that some may have been dismounted by the recoils. But, on the other hand, the *Monk* could have lost near half her guns in this way, and still have been equal to the *Hyder Ally*; and the fact appears to be certain, that the combat was settled by the bold manœuvre of Captain Barney. It is mentioned, moreover, in this same biography, that Captain Rodgers had been two years very actively employed in the *Monk*, when she was taken; and it will be admitted as singular, that he did not understand the power of his guns by that time. Reduced charges, moreover, would have obviated the difficulty in a combat in which the ships touched each other. *Carronades* were scarcely known in 1782, and the *Monk*, received her outfit in 1779. Besides, she would have carried much heavier carronades, had she carried any, the weight of an eighteen-pound carronade being about the same as that of a six-pounder. The biographer has, no doubt, confounded the light nines with carronades of that caliber, the latter gun being much in use when he wrote.

discovered the qualities of a great naval captain ; failing in no essential of that distinguished character.

The *Monk*, her old name having been restored, was taken into the service of the State of Pennsylvania,* and was shortly after sent on duty in behalf of the United States, to the West Indies. During this cruise, Captain Barney had a warm engagement with an English armed brig, supposed to have been a privateer, of about an equal force, but she escaped from him, the meeting occurring in the night, and the enemy manœuvring and sailing particularly well. The name of his antagonist is not known. In this affair, the *Washington* received some damage in her spars, but met with no serious loss.

Massachusetts and South Carolina were the two states that most exerted themselves, in order to equip cruisers of their own. As early as September, 1776, one of the vessels of the former is said to have captured an English sloop of war, after a sharp action ; but we can discover no more than general and vague accounts of the affair.

Among the vessels of Massachusetts was one named after the State itself, and a brig called the *Tyrannicide*. The latter was a successful cruiser, and made many captures, but she was lost in the unfortunate affair in the *Penobscot*. It is believed that the *Tyrannicide* was built expressly for a cruiser. But the favourite officer of this service appears to have been Captain John Foster Williams, who commanded a brig called the *Hazard*, in 1779. In this vessel, in addition to the action already related with the *Active*, Captain Williams performed many handsome exploits, proving himself, on all occasions, an officer of merit.

After quitting the *Hazard*, Captain Williams was transferred to the *Protector 20*, equally a state ship. In this vessel he had the two actions mentioned in another chapter,—that with the *Duff*, and that

* The biographer of Commodore Barney has assumed that, as the General *Washington* was employed on duty in behalf of the United States, Mr. Barney was made a captain in the navy. By the instructions published in this biography, it appears that the commissioners of Pennsylvania put the ship at the disposition of Mr. Robert Morris, in order to transport specie from the Havana to this country. This fact alone would not have made Mr. Barney a captain in the navy ; or the master of every merchantman who is employed by government might claim that rank. It does not make a man a captain in the navy, to command a frigate even, as that duty may be performed, at need, by a gunner. The commission is necessary to make a captain ; and this, Mr. Barney, however deserving of it, does not appear to have possessed until it was given to him in 1794, although he remained a lieutenant in the service to the close of the war. The General *Washington* was employed by the United States down to the peace, it is true ; but this no more puts a ship on the list, than an officer of a merchantman is put on the list by his vessel's being hired as a transport. Government may put its officers in merchant-ships, and they will remain its officers ; or it may put its ships temporarily under the charge of merchant-officers, and the latter will not be in the navy. It may hire, borrow, or forcibly employ vessels, without necessarily placing either the ships or their officers on its regular lists. It does appear, however, that the United States in the end owned the *Washington* ; probably through some subsequent arrangement with Pennsylvania ; she having been sold on public account.

There is no question that Captain Barney ought to have been presented with the commission of a captain in the American navy, for the capture of the *Monk* ; and it is probably owing to the state of the war, then known to be so near a close, and to the general irregularities of the service, that he was not ; but we can find no evidence that Congress ever acquitted itself of this duty.

with the Thames,—in both of which this gallant officer greatly distinguished himself. Soon after this brilliant cruise he resumed the command of the *Hazard*, which was also lost to the state in the unfortunate expedition against the British in the Penobscot. It would probably have been better for Massachusetts had it named this meritorious officer to the command of the naval armament on that occasion. This unhappy affair appears, in a great degree, to have put an end to the maritime efforts of Massachusetts, a state, however, that was foremost to the last, in aiding the general cause.

Of the vessels of Carolina mention has already been made. In the early part of the war several light cruisers were employed, but as the contest advanced, this State entertained a plan of obtaining a few vessels of force, with an intention of striking a blow heavier than common against the enemy. With this view Commodore Gillon, the officer who was at the head of its little marine, went to Europe, and large amounts of colonial produce were transmitted to him, in order to raise the necessary funds. In his correspondence, this officer complains of the difficulty of procuring the right sort of ships, and much time was lost in fruitless negotiations for that purpose, in both France and Holland. At length an arrangement was entered into, for one vessel, that is so singular as to require particular notice. This vessel was the *Indien*, which had been laid down by the American commissioners, at Amsterdam, and subsequently presented to France. She had the dimensions of a small 74, but was a frigate in construction, carrying, however, an armament that consisted of 28 Swedish thirty-sixes on her gun-deck, and of 12 Swedish twelves on her quarter-deck and fore-castle, or 40 guns in the whole. This ship, though strictly the property of France, had been lent by Louis XVI. to the Chevalier de Luxembourg, who hired her to the State of South Carolina for three years, on condition that the State would insure her, sail her at its own expense, and render to her owner one-fourth of the proceeds of her prizes. Under this singular compact,* the ship, which was named the *South Carolina* for the occasion, got out in 1781, and made a successful cruise in the Narrow Seas, sending her prizes into Spain. Afterwards she proceeded to America, capturing ten sail, with which she went into the Havana. Here Commodore Gillon with a view to distress the enemy, accepted the command of the nautical part of an expedition against the Bahamas, that had been set on foot by the Spaniards, and in which other American cruisers joined. The expedition was successful, and the ship proceeded to Philadelphia. Commodore Gillon now left her, and after some delay, the *South Carolina* went to sea, in December, 1782, under the orders of Captain Joyner, an officer who had previously served on board her as second in command. It is probable that the movements of so important a vessel were watched, for she had scarcely cleared the capes, when, after a short running fight,

* Chevalier de Luxembourg, was a French nobleman of the well-known family of Montmorency. Could the truth be come at, it is not improbable that the whole affair would be discovered to have been an indirect species of princely privateering.

she fell into the hands of the British ship *Diomedé* 44, having the *Astrea* 32, and the *Quebec* 32, in company.

The *South Carolina* was much the heaviest ship that ever sailed under the American flag, until the new frigates were constructed during the war of 1812, and she is described as having been a particularly fast vessel; but her service appears to have been greatly disproportioned to her means. She cost the state a large sum of money, and is believed to have returned literally nothing to its treasury. Her loss excited much comment.

Admiral Arbuthnot reports among the "rebel ships of war" taken or sunk at the capture of Charleston, "the *Bricole*, pierced for 60, mounting 44 guns, twenty-four and eighteen-pounders," &c. As there never was a vessel of this name in the navy of the United States, it is probable that this ship was another heavy frigate obtained by the State of South Carolina, in Europe. Although this state had the pecuniary means to equip a better marine than common, it had neither vessels, building yards, nor seamen. Most of its vessels were purchased, and its seamen were principally obtained from places out of its limits, Commodore Gillon and Captain Joyner being both natives of Holland.

We shall now briefly allude to a few private armed cruisers, and close the narrative of the naval events connected with the Revolution. Of the general history of this part of the warfare of the period, the reader will have obtained some idea from our previous accounts; but it may be well here to give a short but more connected summary of its outlines.

The first proceedings of Congress in reference to assailing the British commerce, as has been seen, were reserved and cautious. War not being regularly declared, and an accommodation far from hopeless, the year 1775 was suffered to pass away without granting letters of marque and reprisal; for it was the interest of the nation to preserve as many friends in England as possible. As the breach widened, this forbearing policy was abandoned, and the summer of 1776 let loose the nautical enterprise of the country upon the British commerce. The effect at first was astounding. Never before had England found an enemy so destructive to her trade, and during the two first years of the privateering that followed, something like eight hundred sail of merchantmen were captured. After this period, the effort of the Americans necessarily lessened, while the precautions of the enemy increased. Still, these enterprises proved destructive, 'till the end of the war; and it is a proof of the efficiency of this class of cruisers to the last, that small privateers constantly sailed out of the English ports, with a view to make money by recapturing their own vessels; the trade of America, at this time, offering but few inducements to such undertakings.

Among the vessels employed as private cruisers, the *Holker*, the *Black Prince*, the *Pickering*, the *Wild Cat*, the *Vengeance*, the *Marlborough*, in addition to those elsewhere named, were very conspicuous. The first sailed under different commanders, and with almost uniform success. The *Marlborough* is said to have made

twenty-eight prizes in one cruise. Other vessels were scarcely less fortunate. Many sharp actions occurred, and quite as often to the advantage of these cruisers as to that of the enemy. In repeated instances they escaped from British ships of war, under unfavourable circumstances, and there is no question, that in few cases, they captured them.

To this list ought also to be added the letters of marque, which, in many cases, did great credit to themselves and to the country. Captain Murray, since so well known to the service, made one of the most desperate defences on record, in one of these vessels, near the close of the war; and Captain Truxtun, whose name now occupies so high a station among those of the naval captains of the republic, made another, in the *St. James*, while conveying an American agent to France, which was so highly appreciated that it probably opened the way to the rank that he subsequently filled.

The English West India trade, in particular, suffered largely by the private warfare of the day. Two-and-fifty sail, engaged in this branch of the commerce, are stated to have been taken as early as February, 1777. The whole number of captures made by the Americans in this contest, is not probably known, but six hundred and fifty prizes are said to have been got into port. Many others were ransomed, and some were destroyed at sea. There can be no minute accuracy in these statements, but the injury done to the commerce of Great Britain was enormous; and there is no doubt that the constant hazards it run, had a direct influence in obtaining the acknowledgment of the Independence of the United States of America, which great event took place on the 20th of January, 1783.

Thus terminated the first war in which America was engaged as a separate nation, after a struggle that had endured seven years and ten months. Orders of recall were immediately given to the different cruisers, and the commissions of all privateers and letters of marque were revoked. The proclamation announcing a cessation of hostilities was made on the 11th of April, when the war finally terminated at all points.

CHAPTER XIII.

Brief review—List of vessels in the navy between 1775 and '83, and the fate of each—Description of the *America* 74—she is presented to the king of France—Capt. Manly, anecdote of his first capture—Capture and imprisonment of Capt. Conyngham—Most distinguished naval officers of the Revolution—The American marine—its difficulties—Crew of a vessel of war—its composition—Congress establishes a marine corps—List of officers first appointed—value of the corps—What vessel first carried the American flag.

BEFORE we proceed to give an account of the state in which the war left the American marine, a brief review of its general condition, throughout, and at the close of the struggle, may be found useful.

When the law of 1775 was passed, directing the construction of the first frigates, for the twenty-eights and twenty-fours are included in this class, different building stations were selected, at points thought to be least exposed to the enemy. The vessel that was laid down in New Hampshire, was said to have been put into the water in sixty days from the time the work commenced. But all this activity was of little avail, the want of guns, anchors, rigging, or of some other material article, interfering with the rapid equipment of nearly every one of the thirteen ships.

The vessel just mentioned was the *Raleigh*, and her career can be traced in our previous pages.

The two ships constructed in Massachusetts, the *Hancock* and *Boston*, got to sea; for this part of the country was little annoyed by the enemy after the evacuation of Boston; and their fortunes are also to be found in our pages.

The Rhode Island ships were the *Warren* and *Providence*. These vessels are described as having been the most indifferent of the thirteen. They were launched in 1776, and their services and fates have been given.

The *Montgomery* and *Congress* were the vessels ordered to be built in New York. These ships, it is believed, were constructed at, or near Poughkeepsie, on the Hudson, and did not get to sea, as the British held the mouth of the river from August, 1776, to November, 1783. They were burned in 1777, in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy, when Sir Henry Clinton took the forts in the highlands.

The name of the Maryland ship was the *Virginia*, and her hard fortune has been recorded, in the course of the events of the year 1778.

Pennsylvania had the four remaining vessels, the *Randolph*, the *Washington*, the *Delaware*, and the *Effingham*. Of the first it is unnecessary to say any thing, as her fate is identified with the glory of the service. If the *Delaware* ever got to sea, we find no traces of her movements. She was equipped certainly, and most probably blockaded, falling into the hands of the enemy when they got possession of Philadelphia. The other two were burned in Captain Henry's expedition up the river, in 1778, as has been related.

Thus of the thirteen vessels from which so much was expected, but six got to sea at all, in the service in which they were built. To these were added, in the course of the war, a few other frigates, some permanently, and some only for single cruises. Of the former class were the *Deane*, (*Hague*), *Alliance*, *Confederacy*, and *Queen of France*. It is believed that these four ships, added to the thirteen ordered by the law of 1775, and the *Alfred* and *Columbus*, will comprise all the frigate-built vessels that properly belonged to the marine of the country, during the war of the Revolution. The French vessels that composed most of the squadron of Paul Jones were lent for the occasion, and we hear no more of the *Pallas* after the cruise had ended. She reverted to her original owners.

Of the sloops of war and smaller vessels it is now difficult to give a complete and authentic account. Several were employed by the

commissioners in France, which it is impossible to trace. Congress occasionally borrowed vessels of the states, and generally with their officers and crews on board. Of this class of vessels was the General Washington, (late General Monk,) which unquestionably belonged to the State of Pennsylvania, when first equipped, though she appears to have been subsequently transferred to the General Government, by which she was employed as a packet, as late as the year 1784, when she was sold on public account.

Under such circumstances, and with the defective materials that are now to be obtained, the difficulty of making a perfect list of the vessels that were in the navy during the war of the Revolution is fully felt, and yet, without some such record, this book will have an air of incompleteness. One, that has been corrected with care, is accordingly given, and as nothing is admitted into it, without authority, it is believed to be correct as far as it goes; its defects being those of omission, rather than positive errors. Annexed to the name of each vessel is her fate, as an American cruiser, so far as the facts can be ascertained.

List of vessels of war in the American navy between the years 1775 and 1783.

Alliance 32, sold after the peace and converted into an Indiaman.*
Deane (Hague) 32.

Virginia 28, taken by a British squadron near the capes of the Chesapeake, before getting to sea, 1778.

Confederacy 32, taken by a ship of the line, off the capes of Virginia, June 22d, 1781.

Hancock 32, taken in 1777, by Rainbow 44, and Victor 16. Flora 32, retook her prize.

Randolph 32, blown up in action with the Yarmouth 64, in 1778.

Raleigh 32, taken by the Experiment 50, and Unicorn 22, 1778.

Washington 32, destroyed in the Delaware by the British army, 1778, without getting to sea.

Warren 32, burned in the Penobscot in 1779, to prevent her falling into the enemy's hands.

Queen of France 28, captured at Charleston in 1780.

Providence 28, do. do. do.

Trumbull 28, taken by the Iris 32, and General Monk 18, 1781.

Effingham 28, burned by the enemy in the Delaware, 1778, without getting to sea.

Congress 28, destroyed in the Hudson, 1777, to prevent her falling into the enemy's hands, without getting to sea.

Alfred 24, captured by the Ariadne and Ceres, in 1778.

Columbus 20.

Delaware 24, captured by the British army in the Delaware, in 1777.

Boston 24, captured at Charleston, in 1780.

Montgomery 24, destroyed in the Hudson without getting to sea, 1777.

Hamden 14.

Reprisal 16, foundered at sea, 1778.

*Her wreck still lies on an island in the Delaware.

Lexington 14, taken by the British cutter Alert, in the channel, 1778.
 Andrea Doria 14, burned in the Delaware, 1777, to prevent her falling into the enemy's hands.

Cabot 16, driven ashore by the Milford 32, in 1777, and abandoned.
 Ranger 18, captured at Charleston by the British army, 1780.

Saratoga 16, lost at sea in 1780; never heard of

Diligent 14, burned in the Penobscot, 1778.

Gates 14.

Hornet 10.

Surprise 10, seized by the French government, in 1777.

Revenge 10, sold in 1780.

Providence 12, taken in the Penobscot in 1779.

Sachem	10	} Supposed to have been destroyed in the Delaware by the enemy, or by the Americans, to prevent their falling into the enemy's hands.
Wasp	8	
Independence	10	
Dolphin	10	

To these vessels must be added the following ships, which appear to have made one or more cruises under the American flag, commanded by American officers, and manned, in part, by American seamen.

Bon Homme Richard 40, sunk after her action with the Serapis 44, in 1779.

Pallas 32, left the service when the cruise was ended.

Vengeance 12, do. do. do.

Cerf 18, do. do. do.

Ariel 20, borrowed by the commissioners from the king of France, and supposed to have been returned.

These lists contain nearly, if not quite all the vessels of any size that properly belonged to the navy of the American Confederation. There were several more small cruisers, mounting from 4 to 10 guns, but their service appears to have been as uncertain as their fates, though, like the privateers, most of them, it is believed, fell into the hands of their powerful and numerous foes. Several ships, also, appear to have belonged to the government, such as the Duc de Lauzun, the Luzerne, Washington, &c., that we do not think entitled to be classed among its regular cruisers.

Most of the popular accounts make the America 74, the first two-decked ship ever built within the limits of the United States. That this is an error, has already been shown, in one of our earlier pages, and there is reason to suppose that the English caused several small vessels on two decks to be constructed in the American colonies, previously to the war of the Revolution. It would have been more accurate to have stated that the America was the heaviest ship that had been laid down in the country, at the time she was built. This vessel was captured from the French, by the British, in the engagement of the 1st of June.*

* We give the following outline of the description of the America, as left by Paul Jones, to show what were then deemed peculiarities in the construction of a ship of the line. The upper deck bulwarks are particularly described as "breast-works pierced for guns," and he adds, that all the quarter-deck and fore-castle guns could be fought, at need,

The management of the little navy that the United States possessed during this long and important struggle, was necessarily much controlled by circumstances. When the conflict commenced, it could scarcely be termed a war, and the country hardly possessed an organised government at all. It had been the policy of England to keep her colonies as dependent as possible on herself for all manufactured articles; and when the Revolution broke out, the new states were almost destitute of the means of carrying on the struggle. Much as has been said and written on this subject, the world scarcely seems to possess an accurate notion of the embarrassments to which the Americans were subjected in consequence of deficiencies of this nature. The first important relief was obtained through the cruisers, and it is scarcely saying too much to add, that, without the succours that were procured in this manner, during the years 1775 and 1776, the Revolution must have been checked in the outset.*

In addition to the direct benefits conferred by the captures, the marine was of incalculable advantage in bringing Europe in contact with America, by showing the flag and ships of the new country in the old world. Notwithstanding the many obstacles that were to be overcome, the high maritime spirit of the nation broke through all restraints; and in defiance of an enemy that almost possessed ubiquity, as well as an overwhelming power, the conflict between Britain and her despised and oppressed colonies had not continued a twelvemonth, when the coasts of the former country were harassed and agitated by the audacity and enterprise of the American cruisers. Insurance rose to a height hitherto unknown, and for the first time in her history, England felt the effects which a people thoroughly imbued with a love of maritime adventure, could produce on a nation so commercial.

The activity and merit of the brave men who first carried the war into the enemy's seas, have not been fully appreciated by the present age. Foremost ought to be placed the name of Wickes, who led the way, and who appears to have performed the duty confided to him, with discretion, spirit, and steadiness. The untimely fate of this

on one side; from which it is to be inferred that the ship had ports in her waist. The poop had a "folding breast-work," grape-shot proof, or bulwarks that were lowered and hoisted in a minute. The quarter deck ran four feet forward of the main-mast, and the forecastle came well aft. The gangways were wide, and *on the level of the quarter-deck and fore-castle*. The ship had only single quarter galleries, and no stern gallery. She had 50 feet 6 inches beam, over all, and her inboard length, on the upper gun-deck, was 182 feet 6 inches. "Yet this ship, *though the largest of seventy-fours in the world*, had, when the lower battery was sunk, the air of a delicate frigate; and no person, at the distance of a mile, could have imagined she had a second battery." Unfortunately her intended armament is not given.

* The following anecdote rests on the authority of the secretary of the Marine Committee of Congress, the body that discharged the duties that are now performed by the navy department. The committee was in secret session, deliberating on the means of obtaining certain small articles that were indispensable to the equipment of vessels of war, but which were not to be had in the country, when a clamour for admittance at the door, interrupted the proceedings. Admittance was denied, but the intruder insisted on entering. The door was finally opened, when a gentleman appeared, with an inventory of the stores found in the Nancy, the first vessel taken by Captain Manly, and among which were the very articles wanted. Mr. Adams, when the fact was ascertained, arose and said with earnestness:—"We must succeed---Providence is with us---we must succeed!"

gallant officer, who had obtained the respect and confidence of the American commissioners, was probably the reason that his name does not fill as high a place in the public estimation as his services merit.

Captain Conyngham, also, to his other claims, adds that of suffering. He fell into the hands of the enemy, after his return to the American seas, while cruising in a small private armed vessel, and was sent to England in irons, with a threat to treat him as a pirate. His imprisonment was long and severe; nor was his liberty obtained, until months of bitter privation had been passed in a gaol.

The naval names that have descended to us, from this war, with the greatest reputation, are those of Jones, Barry, Barney, Biddle, Manly, Nicholson, Wickes, Rathburne, Conyngham, and Hacker. To these may be added that of Williams, who was in the service of Massachusetts. Other officers greatly distinguished themselves, either in subordinate stations on board vessels of war, or on board the different cruisers. Many of the latter subsequently rose to high stations in the national marine, and we shall have occasion to allude to their conduct in our subsequent pages.

The nature of the warfare, unquestionably trammelled the national efforts in this contest. The circumstance that only six out of thirteen new cruisers that were laid down under the law of October, 1775, ever got to sea, shows the difficulties with which the country had to contend on account of so many of its ports having been occupied by invading armies, of a force and discipline that no power of the young republic could then withstand. No less than six of these vessels fell into the enemy's hands, by means of their land forces, or were destroyed by the Americans themselves, to prevent such a result. In New York, the British held the port, of all others, which would have been of the greatest service to the country, in a naval war, as its central position, many natural advantages, difficulty of being blockaded on account of a double outlet, and resources, will always render it the centre of maritime operations, in every struggle for the command of the American seas.

But the greatest obstacles with which the young marine had to contend, were a total absence of system, a looseness of discipline, and a want of vessels of force. The irregularities of the service, it is true, grew out of the exigencies of the times, but their evils were incalculable. Rank, that great source of contention in all services in which it is not clearly defined and rigidly regulated, appears to have created endless heart-burnings. The dissensions of the officers, naturally communicated themselves to the men; and in time, this difficulty was added to the others which existed in obtaining crews. It is a singular fact, that, with the exception perhaps of that favourite ship, the *Alliance*, we cannot find that any frigate-built vessel left the country, after the first year or two of the war, with a full crew on board of her; and even those with which they did sail, were either composed, in a good measure, of landsmen, or the officers had been compelled to resort to the dangerous expedient of seeking for volunteers among the prisoners. We have seen that the *Alliance* herself,

with her precious freight, was near being the sacrifice of this ill-judged, not to say unjust policy. The *Trumbull*, when taken, was fought principally by her officers; and, at the very moment when confidence was of the last importance to success, the vessels of Paul Jones' squadron appear to have distrusted each other, and to have acted with the uncertainty of such a state of feeling.

To the lightness of the metal used during this war, is to be ascribed the duration of the combats. It has been seen, that the *Bon Homme Richard* had a few eighteen-pounders mounted in her gun-room; and there are occasional allusions in the accounts of the day, that would induce us to believe that some of the larger vessels built for the service, had a few guns of this caliber, mixed in with their more regular armaments; but, strictly speaking, there was not a ship in the American navy, during the whole war of the Revolution, that ought to be termed more than a twelve-pounder frigate. The *America* 74, would have been an exception, of course, could she properly be said to have belonged to the service, but she was virtually transferred to France previously to being put into the water. The *Bon Homme Richard* had the dimensions of, and was pierced for a thirty-eight, but her regular and only efficient batteries, were composed of twelves and nines. The *Indien*, or *South Carolina*, as she was subsequently called, was probably as heavy a frigate as then floated; but she sailed in the service of the single state of *South Carolina*, and never belonged to the marine of the country.

No correct estimate can be ever made of the merits of the gallant seamen, whose acts have been recorded in these pages, without keeping in constant view, all the disadvantages under which they served. With vessels, quite often imperfectly equipped; frequently with such guns, ammunition and stores, as are known to be disposed of to nations, the necessities of which supersede caution; with crews badly, often dangerously composed, and without the encouragement that power can proffer to success, these faithful men went forth upon an ocean that was covered with the cruisers of their enemy, to contend with foes every way prepared for war, who were incited by all that can awaken ambition, and who met them with the confidence that is the inseparable companion of success and a consciousness of force.

While pointing out the claims of the seamen of the Revolution to that honourable place in history which it is our aim to contribute in securing to them, there is another corps, one that has so long been associated with navies as to be almost necessarily included in their renown, which is entitled to a distinct notice in these pages. It is so much a matter of course, to identify the marines with the ship in which they serve, that we have not hitherto thought it necessary to digress from the course of events to speak particularly of that body of men. The corps, however, is so necessary to the military character of every service, has ever been so efficient and useful, not only in carrying on the regular routine of duty, but in face of the enemy, and was so all-important to the security of the ships, during the period of which we have been writing, that we have reserved a place for a brief account of its organisation in this chapter. In order that the

general reader may more clearly comprehend this branch of the subject, however, and obtain a better idea of the composition of the crew of a vessel of war, a paragraph will be devoted to a few explanations.

The men of a public armed ship are divided into two distinct bodies; the portion of the people that do the ordinary duty of the vessel, which includes the petty officers, seamen, ordinary seamen, landsmen and boys, and the marines. The former pass under the general name of sailors, while the latter are always known by their own distinctive appellation. The marines are strictly infantry soldiers, who are trained to serve afloat; and their discipline, equipments, spirit, character, and esprit de corps, are altogether those of an army. The marines impart to a ship of war, in a great degree, its high military character. They furnish all the guards and sentinels; in battle they repel, or cover the assaults of boarders; and, at all times, they sustain and protect the stern and necessary discipline of a ship by their organisation, distinctive character, training, and we might add, nature. It is usual to place one of these soldiers on board a ship of war for each gun, though the rule is not absolute. It is not, however, to be understood by this, that the marines are regularly dispersed in the ship, by placing them at the guns, as, unless in cases that form exceptions, they act together, under their own officers, using the musket and bayonet as their proper weapons.

Aware of the importance of such a body of men, on the 9th of November, 1775, or before any regular cruiser had yet got to sea, Congress passed a law establishing a marine corps. By this law, the corps was to consist of two battalions of the usual size, and to be commanded by a colonel. A resolution passed on the 30th of the same month, directing that these two battalions should not be drafted from the army before Boston, but regularly enlisted for the war. It does not appear that this law was ever carried into complete effect; the great difficulty which existed in obtaining men for the army, no less than the impracticability of getting so many of the vessels to sea, most probably contributing to defeat its objects. On the 25th June, 1776, notwithstanding, the corps received something like the contemplated organisation, and officers were appointed to serve in it. That there were marines in the squadron of Commodore Hopkins, is known from the fact of their having been landed at New Providence, where they were the assailing force; but even the greater portion of the sea officers, employed on that occasion, had merely letters of appointment, and, it is to be presumed, that such was also the case with the gentlemen of this arm. The following list of the officers of the marine corps, who were appointed in June, 1776, contains the names of those who properly formed the nucleus of this important and respectable part of the navy.

Officers of Marines appointed June 25th, 1776.

Samuel Nichols, Major.

Andrew Porter, Captain.

Joseph Hardy, do.

Samuel Shaw,	Captain.
Benj. Deane,	do.
Robert Mullin,	do.
John Stewart,	do.
Daniel Henderson,	First Lieutenant.
David Lowe,	do.
Franklin Read,	do.
Peregrine Brown,	do.
Thomas Barnwell,	do.
James McClure,	Second Lieutenant
William Gilmore,	do.
Abel Morgan,	do.
Hugh Montgomery,	do.
Richard Harrison,	do.

Other nominations followed, from time to time, though it is believed that in many cases, officers commanding ships, were empowered to give letters of appointment. In short, the irregularity and want of system that prevailed in the navy generally, extended in a degree to a branch of it that is usually so trained, so methodical and certain.

At no period of the naval history of the world, is it probable that marines were more important than during the war of the Revolution. In many instances they preserved the vessels to the country, by suppressing the turbulence of their ill-assorted crews, and the effect of their fire, not only then, but in all the subsequent conflicts, under those circumstances in which it could be resorted to, has usually been singularly creditable to their steadiness and discipline. The history of the navy, even at that early day, as well as in these later times, abounds with instances of the gallantry and self-devotion of this body of soldiers, and we should be unfaithful to our trust, were we not to add, that it also furnishes too many proofs of the forgetfulness of its merits by the country. The marine incurs the same risks from disease and tempests, undergoes the same privations, suffers the same hardships, and sheds his blood in the same battles as the seaman, and society owes him the same rewards. While on shipboard necessity renders him in a certain sense, the subordinate, but nations ought never to overlook the important moral and political truth, that the highest lessons they can teach are those of justice; and no servant of the public should pass a youth of toil and danger, without the consciousness of possessing a claim to a certain and honourable reward, that is dependent only on himself. That this reward has hitherto been as unwisely as it has been unfairly withheld, from all connected with the navy, it is our duty as historians to state, and in no instance has this justice been more signally denied, than in the case of the honourable and gallant corps of which we are particularly writing.

It remains only to say that the navy of the Revolution, like its army, was disbanded at the termination of the struggle, literally leaving nothing behind it, but the recollections of its services and sufferings.

CHAPTER XIV

First vessel to China---Adoption of the Union---its effect on the navy---Difficulties with the Dey of Algiers---John Paul Jones appointed consul---His death at Paris---Capture of American vessels by an Algerine squadron---Warlike preparations---Mr. Humphrey's models for six new frigates accepted---the improvements described---Notice of the commanders selected---Treaty with Algiers---The Crescent made a present to the Dey---Singular extract from a journal respecting her freight---French aggressions---Launch of the United States, the Constitution, and the Constellation---Navy department created---The capture of French cruisers authorised by law---New marine corps established---Whole authorised force of the navy.

THE peace of 1783 found the finances of the new republic altogether unequal to the support of a marine. Most of the public cruisers, as has been seen, had fallen into the hands of the enemy, or had been destroyed, and the few that remained were sold. The Alliance, which appears to have been the favourite ship of the service to the very last, was reluctantly parted with; but a survey being held on her, she was also disposed of in September, 1785, in preference to encountering the expenses of repairs.

Although the United States now kept no vessels of war, several of the states themselves, with the consent of Congress, which was necessary by the articles of confederation, had small cruisers of their own, that did the duties of guarda-costas and revenue cutters. At this period in the history of the country, it will be remembered that each state had its own custom-houses, levied its own duties, and pursued its own policy in trade, with the single exception that it could not contravene any stipulation by treaty that had been entered into by Congress.

After the peace, the trade of the United States revived, as a matter of course, though it had to contend with many difficulties, besides the impoverished condition of the country. It has been a matter of question what vessel first carried the American flag into the Chinese seas, but there can be no doubt that it was the ship *Empress of China*, Captain Green, which sailed from New York, the 22d of February, 1784, and returned to the same port on the 11th of May, 1785. This vessel, however, did not make a direct voyage, touching in Europe, on her outward-bound passage; and the honour of going direct belongs to the *Enterprise*, Captain Dean, a sloop of 80 tons, built in Albany, which went and returned in 1785. It ought to be mentioned, to the credit of the English factory at Canton, that, notwithstanding the jealousies and interests of trade, which, perhaps, oftener lead to unprincipled acts, than any other one concern of life, struck with the novelty and boldness of the experiment, it received these adventurers with kindness and hospitality. In 1787 the Alliance frigate, converted into an Indiaman, went to Canton, under the command of Captain Thomas Read, formerly of the navy. This officer took a new route, actually going to the southward of New Holland, in consequence of the season of the year, which had brought him into the unfavourable monsoons. Notwithstanding this long

circuit, the noble old ship made the passage in very tolerable time. Captain Read discovered some islands to the eastward of New Holland.

The period between the peace and the year 1788, was one of troubles, insurrections in the states, and difficulties growing out of the defective political organisation of the country. To these grievances may be added the embarrassments arising from the renewal of the claims of the British merchants, that had been suspended by the war. All these circumstances united to produce uncertainty and distress. Discreet men saw the necessity of a change of system, and the results of the collected wisdom of the nation were offered to the world in a plan for substituting the constitution of an identified government, in the place of the articles of association, and of creating what has since been popularly termed the Union, in lieu of the old Confederation. The scheme was adopted, and in April 1789, the new government went into operation, with Washington at its head, as President.

The entire military organisation underwent many important alterations, by this change of government. The President became the commander-in-chief of both the army and navy, and he possessed the civil power of appointing their officers, subject only to the approbation of a senate, which was also instituted on this occasion, and to a few subordinate regulations of Congress. In addition to this high trust, was confided to him one of still heavier responsibilities, by which he could dismiss any civil or military officer, the judges excepted, however high his rank, or long his services. The supplies were raised directly by the federal power, without the intervention of the states; and the entire government, within the circle of its authority, became as direct and as efficient as that of any other polity which possessed the representative form.

The beneficial consequences of these fundamental alterations were visible in all the departments of the country. It was deemed premature, nevertheless, to think of the re-establishment of a marine; for, oppressed with debt, and menaced with a renewal of the war with England, the administration of Washington was cautiously, and with the greatest prudence, endeavouring to extricate the country from the various entanglements that were perhaps inseparable from its peculiar condition, and to set in motion the machinery of a new and an entirely novel mode of conducting the affairs of a state. While Washington, and his ministers, appeared to be fully sensible of the importance of a navy, the poverty of the treasury alone would have been deemed an insuperable objection to encountering its expense. Still, so evident was the connexion between an efficient government and a permanent and strong marine, in a country like this, that when Paul Jones first heard of the change, he prepared to return to America in the confident hope of being again employed.

In the mean time, the Dey of Algiers, discovering that a new country had started into existence, which possessed merchant vessels and no cruisers, as a matter of course began to prey on its commerce. On the 25th of July, 1785, the schooner Maria, belonging to Boston,

was seized, outside of the Straits of Gibraltar, by a corsair, and her crew were carried into slavery. This unprovoked piracy,—though committed under the forms of a legal government, the act deserves this reproach,—was followed, on the 30th of the same month, by the capture of the ship *Dolphin*, of Philadelphia, Captain O'Brien, who, with all his people, was made to share the same fate. On the 9th of July, 1790, or a twelvemonth after the organisation of the federal government, there still remained in captivity, fourteen of the unfortunate persons who had been thus seized. Of course five bitter years had passed in slavery, because, at the period named, the United States of America, the country to which they belonged did not possess sufficient naval force to compel the petty tyrant at the head of the Algerine government to do justice! In looking back at events like these, we feel it difficult to persuade ourselves that the nation was really so powerless, and cannot but suspect that in the strife of parties, the struggles of opinion, and the pursuit of gain, the sufferings of the distant captive were overlooked or forgotten. One of the first advantages of the new system, was connected with the measures taken by the administration of Washington to relieve these unfortunate persons. A long and weary negotiation ensued, and Paul Jones was appointed, in 1792, to be an agent for effecting the liberation of the captives. At the same time, a commission was also sent to him, naming him consul at the regency of Algiers. This celebrated man, for whose relief these nominations were probably made, was dead before the arrival of the different commissions at Paris. A second agent was named in the person of Mr. Barclay; but this gentleman also died before he could enter on the duties of the office.

Algiers and Portugal had long been at war, and, though the latter government seldom resorted to active measures against the town of its enemy, it was very useful to the rest of the Christian world, by maintaining a strong force in the Straits of Gibraltar, rendering it difficult for any rover to find her way out of the Mediterranean. Contrary to all expectations, this war was suddenly terminated in 1793, through the agency of the British consul at Algiers, and, as it was said, without the knowledge of the Portuguese government. This peace or truce, allowed the Algerine rovers to come again into the Atlantic, and its consequences to the American commerce were soon apparent. A squadron consisting of four ships, three xebecs, and a brig, immediately passed the straits, and by the 9th of October, 1793, four more American vessels had fallen into the hands of these lawless barbarians. At the same time, the Dey of Algiers, who had commenced this quarrel without any other pretence than a demand for tribute, refused all accommodations, even menacing the person of the minister appointed by the American government, should he venture to appear within his dominions! During the first cruise of the vessels mentioned, they captured ten Americans, and made one hundred and five additional prisoners.

These depredations had now reached a pass when further submission became impossible, without a total abandonment of those rights, that it is absolutely requisite for every independent govern-

ment to maintain. The cabinet took the subject into grave deliberation, and on the 3d of March, 1794, the President sent a message to Congress, communicating all the facts connected with the Algerine depredations. On the 27th of the same month, a law was approved by the executive, authorising the construction, or the purchase of six frigates, or of such other naval force, that should not be inferior to that of the six frigates named, as the President might see fit to order, provided no vessel should mount less than 32 guns. This law had a direct reference to the existing difficulties with Algiers, and it contained a paragraph ordering that all proceedings under its provisions should cease, in the event of an accommodation of the quarrel with that regency. Notwithstanding this limit to the action of the law, the latter may be considered the first step taken towards the establishment of the present navy, as some of the ships that were eventually constructed under it are still in use, and some of the officers who were appointed to them, passed the remainder of their lives in the service.

The executive was no sooner authorised to proceed by the law of the 27th of March, 1794, than measures were taken to build the vessels ordered. The provision of the first paragraph was virtually followed, and the six frigates were laid down as soon as possible. These vessels were the

Constitution	44,	laid down at Boston.
President	44,	" New York.
United States	44,	" Philadelphia.
Chesapeake	38,	" Portsmouth, Va.
Constellation	38,	" Baltimore.
Congress	38,	" Portsmouth, N. H.

The most capable builders in the country were consulted, the models of Mr. Joshua Humphreys, of Philadelphia* being those accepted. On this occasion, an important and recent improvement in ship-building was adopted, by which frigates were increased in size and in efficiency, by so far lengthening them, as to give to ships on one deck, the metal that had formerly been distributed on two. The three ships first mentioned in the foregoing list, were of this class of vessels, being pierced for thirty twenty-four-pounders, on their gun-decks, while their upper-deck armaments varied with circumstances. On this occasion they were rated as forty-fours, a description of vessel that had previously borne its guns on two decks, besides the quarter-deck and fore-castle. The others were of the force of the common English thirty-eights, carrying 28 eighteens below, and as many lighter guns above as was deemed expedient. From a want of system, the Chesapeake was known in the accounts of the day as a forty-four, and she even figures in the reports under the law, as a vessel of that rate, owing to the circumstance that she was originally intended for a ship of that force and size. In consequence of a diffi-

* The idea of constructing ships of heavy metal, on one deck, has been claimed for this architect. With whom the thought originated we do not pretend to say. The *Indien*, within the revolution, was certainly a vessel of that class, and the English had a few twenty-four-pounder frigates as early as the Americans.

culty in obtaining the necessary frame, her dimensions were lessened, and she took her place in the navy, by the side of the two vessels last mentioned on the foregoing list. But so much inaccuracy existed at that day, and the popular accounts abound with so many errors of this nature, that we shall find many occasions to correct similar mistakes, before we reach a period when the service was brought within the rules of a uniform and consistent system.

In selecting commanders for these ships, the President very naturally turned to those old officers who had proved themselves fit for the stations, during the war of the Revolution. Many of the naval captains of that trying period, however, were already dead, and others, again, had become incapacitated by age and wounds, for the arduous duties of sea-officers. The following is the list selected, which took rank in the order in which the names appear, viz :—

John Barry,	Joshua Barney,
Samuel Nicholson,	Richard Dale,
Silas Talbot,	Thomas Truxtun.

With the exception of Captain Truxtun, all of these gentlemen had served in the navy during the Revolution. Captain Barry was the only one of the six who was not born in America, but he had passed nearly all his life in it, and was thoroughly identified with his adopted country in feeling and interests. He had often distinguished himself during the preceding war, and, perhaps, of all the naval captains that remained, he was the one who possessed the greatest reputation for experience, conduct and skill. The appointment met with general approbation, nor did any thing ever occur to give the government reason to regret its selection.

Captain Nicholson had served with credit in subordinate situations, in command of the *Hague*, or *Deane 32*, and in one instance, at the head of a small squadron. This officer also commanded the *Dolphin 10*, the cutter that the commissioners sent with Captain Wickes, in his successful cruise in the narrow seas.

Captain Talbot's career was singular, for though connected with the sea in his youth, he had entered the army, at the commencement of the Revolution, and was twice promoted in that branch of the service, for gallantry and skill on the water. This gentleman had been raised to the rank of a captain in the navy, in 1779, but he had never been able to obtain a ship. Subsequently to the war, Captain Talbot had retired from the sea, and he had actually served one term in Congress.

Captain Barney had served as a lieutenant in many actions, and commanded the Pennsylvania state cruiser, the *Hyder Ally*, when she took the General Monk. This officer declined his appointment in consequence of having been put junior to *Lieut. Colonel Talbot*, and Captain Sever was named in his place.

Captain Dale had been Paul Jones' first lieutenant, besides seeing much other service in subordinate stations during the war of the Revolution.

Captain Truxtun had a reputation for spirit that his subsequent

career fully justified, and had seen much service during the Revolution, in command of different private vessels of war.

The rank of the subordinate officers eventually appointed to these ships, was determined by that of the different commanders, the senior lieutenant of Captain Barry's vessel taking rank of all the other first lieutenants, and the junior officers accordingly.

All these preparations, however, were suddenly suspended by the signing of a treaty with Algiers, in Nov. 1795. By a provision of the law, the work was not to be prosecuted in the event of such a peace, and the President immediately called the attention of Congress to the subject. A new act was passed, without delay, ordering the completion and equipment of two of the forty-fours, and of one of the thirty-eights, while it directed the work on the remaining three ships to be stopped, and the perishable portion of their materials to be sold. A sum which had also been voted for the construction of some galleys, but no part of which had yet been used, was applied to the equipment of these vessels ordered to be launched.*

The President, in his annual speech to Congress, December, 1796, strongly recommended laws for the gradual increase of the navy. It is worthy of remark, that as appears by documents published at the time, the peace obtained from the Dey of Algiers cost the government of the United States near a million of dollars, a sum quite sufficient to have kept the barbarian's port hermetically blockaded until he should have humbly sued for permission to send a craft to sea.

While these events were gradually leading to the formation of a navy, the maritime powers of Europe became involved in what was nearly a general war, and their measures of hostility against each

* The reader will obtain some idea of the spirit which may prevail in a nation, when it does not possess, or neglects to use, the means of causing its rights and character to be respected, by the tone of the following article, which is extracted from a journal of the date of 1798, and which would seem to be as much in unison with the temper of that day, as one of an opposite character would comport with the spirit of our own times. Algiers will not extort tribute again from America, but other rights, not less dear to national honour, national character, and national interests, may be sacrificed to a temporising spirit, should not the navy be enlarged, and made the highest aim of national policy.

"Crescent Frigate.

"Portsmouth, Jan. 20.

"On Thursday morning about sunrise, a gun was discharged from the Crescent frigate, as a signal for getting under way; and at 10, A. M., she cleared the harbour, with a fine leading breeze. Our best wishes follow Captain Newman, his officers and men. May they arrive in safety at the place of their destination, and present to the Dey of Algiers, one of the finest specimens of elegant naval architecture which was ever borne on the Piscataqua's waters.

"Blow all ye winds that fill the prosperous sail,
And hush'd in peace be every adverse gale.

"The Crescent is a present from the United States to the Dey, as compensation for delay in not fulfilling our treaty stipulations in proper time.

"Richard O'Brien, Esq., who was ten years a prisoner at Algiers, took passage in the above frigate, and is to reside at Algiers as Consul General of the United States to all the Barbary states.

"The Crescent has many valuable presents on board for the Dey, and when she sailed was supposed to be worth at least *three hundred thousand dollars*.

"Twenty-six barrels of dollars constituted a part of her cargo.

"It is worthy of remark, that the captain, chief of the officers, and many of the privates of the Crescent frigate, have been prisoners at Algiers."

other had a direct tendency to trespass on the privileges of neutrals. It would exceed the limits of this work to enter into the history of that system of gradual encroachments on the rights of the American people, which distinguished the measures of both the two great belligerents, in the war that succeeded the French Revolution; or the height of audacity to which the cruisers of France, in particular, carried their depredations, most probably mistaking the amount of the influence of their own country, over the great body of the American nation. Not only did they capture British ships within our waters, but they actually took the same liberties with Americans also. All attempts to obtain redress of the French government failed, and unable to submit any longer to such injustice, the government, in April, 1798, recommended to Congress a plan of armament and defence, that it was hoped would have the effect to check these aggressions, and avert an open conflict. Down to this period, the whole military defence of the country, was entrusted to one department, that of war; and a letter from the secretary of this branch of the government, to the chairman of a committee to devise means of protection and defence, was the form in which this high interest was brought before the nation, through its representatives. Twenty small vessels were advised to be built, and, in the event of an open rupture, it was recommended to Congress to authorise the President to cause six ships of the line to be constructed. This force was in addition to the six frigates authorised by the law of 1794.

The United States 44, Constitution 44, and Constellation 38, had been got afloat the year previous. These three ships are still in the service, and during the last forty years, neither has ever been long out of commission.

The United States was the first vessel that was got into the water, under the present organisation of the navy. She was launched at Philadelphia, on the 10th of July, 1797, and the Constellation followed her on the 7th of September.

Congress acted so far on the recommendation of the secretary of war, as to authorise the President to cause to be built, purchased, or hired, twelve vessels, none of which were to exceed twenty-two guns, and to see that they were duly equipped and manned. To effect these objects \$950,000 were appropriated. This law passed the 27th of April, 1798, and on the 30th, a regular navy department was formally created. Benjamin Stoddart of Georgetown in the District of Columbia, was the first secretary put at the head of this important branch of the government, entering on his duties in June of the same year.

After so long and so extraordinary a forgetfulness of one of the most important interests of the nation, Congress now seemed to be in earnest; the depredations of the French having reached a pass that could no longer be submitted to with honour. On the 4th of May, a new appropriation was made for the construction of galleys and other small vessels, and on the 28th of the same month, the President was empowered to instruct the commanders of the public vessels to capture and send into port all French cruisers, whether

public or private, that might be found on the coast, having committed, or which there was reason to suppose might commit, any depredations on the commerce of the country; and, to recapture any American vessel that might have already fallen into their hands. Additional laws were soon passed for the condemnation of such prizes, and for the safe keeping of their crews. In June another law was passed, authorising the President to accept of twelve more vessels of war, should they be offered to him by the citizens, and to issue public stock in payment. By a clause in this act, it was provided that these twelve ships, as well as the twelve directed to be procured in the law of the 27th of April of the same year, should consist of six not exceeding 18 guns, of twelve between 20 and 24 guns, and of six of not less than 32 guns. The cautious manner in which the national legislature proceeded, on this occasion, will remind the reader of the reserve used in 1775, and 1776; and we trace distinctly, in both instances, the moderation of a people averse to war, no less than a strong reluctance to break the ties of an ancient but much abused amity.

Down to this moment, the old treaty of alliance, formed between France and the United States during the war of the Revolution, and some subsequent conventions, were legally in existence; but Congress by law solemnly abrogated them all, on the 7th of July, 1798, on the plea that they had been repeatedly disregarded by France, and that the latter country continued, in the face of the most solemn remonstrances, to uphold a system of predatory warfare on the commerce of the United States.

It will be seen that an express declaration of war was avoided in all these measures, nor was it resorted to, at all, throughout this controversy, although war, in fact, existed from the moment the first American cruisers appeared on the ocean. On the 9th of July, 1798, another law passed, authorising the American vessels of war to capture French cruisers wherever they might be found, and empowering the President to issue commissions to private armed vessels, conveying to them the same rights as regarded captures, as had been given to the public ships. By this act, the prizes became liable to condemnation, for the benefit of the captors.

On the 11th of July, 1798, a new marine corps was established by law, the old one having dissolved with the navy of the Revolution, to which it had properly belonged. It contained 881 officers, non-commissioned officers, musicians and privates, and was commanded by a major. On the 16th of the same month, a law was passed to construct three more frigates. This act was expressed in such terms as to enable the government immediately to complete the ships commenced under the law of 1794, and which had been suspended under that of 1796. The whole force authorised by law, on the 16th of July, consequently, consisted of twelve frigates; twelve ships of a force between 20 and 24 guns, inclusive; and six smaller sloops, besides galleys and revenue cutters; making a total of thirty active cruisers.

Such is the history of the legislation that gave rise to the present

American marine, and which led to what is commonly called the *quasi* war against France. There appears to have been no enactments limiting the number of the officers, who were appointed according to the wants of the service, though their stations and allowances were duly regulated by law.

While the government of the United States was taking these incipient and efficient steps to defend the rights and character of the nation, the better feeling of the country was entirely in its favour. Families of the highest social and political influence pressed forward to offer their sons to the service, and the navy being the favourite branch, nearly all of those who thus presented themselves, and whose ages did not preclude the probationary delay, had their names enrolled on the list of midshipmen. Young and intelligent seamen were taken from the merchant service, to receive the rank of lieutenants, and the commanders and captains were either chosen from among those who had seen service in the war of the Revolution, or who by their experience in the charge of Indiamen, and other vessels of value, were accustomed to responsibility and command. It may be well to add, here, that the seamen of the nation joined heartily in the feeling of the day, and that entire crews were frequently entered for frigates in the course of a few hours. Want of men was hardly experienced at all in this contest; and we deem it a proof that seamen can always be had in a war that offers active service, by voluntary enlistments, provided an outlet be not offered to enterprise through the medium of private cruisers. Although commissions were granted to privateers and letters of marque, on this occasion, comparatively few of the former were taken out, the commerce of France offering but slight inducements to encounter the expense.

During the year 1797, or previously to the commencement of hostilities between the United States and France, the exports of the former country amounted to \$57,000,000, and the shipping had increased to quite 800,000 tons, while the population, making an estimate from the census of 1800, had risen to near 5,000,000. The revenue of the year was \$8,209,070.

CHAPTER XV.

The Ganges, Capt. Richard Dale, is brought into the service with orders to capture all French cruisers &c..... Capture of Le Croyable, by the Delaware, Capt. Decatur..... Naval force at sea..... Affair of the Baltimore and the British ship Carnatic..... Five of the Baltimore's crew are impressed and three of her convoy captured..... Capt. Phillips of the Baltimore, dismissed from the navy..... Different opinions respecting his conduct..... Capture of the Retaliation, Lieut. Bainbridge, by the Volontaire and Insurgent..... Escape of the Montezuma and Norfolk..... Return and promotion of Lieut. Bainbridge..... Captures of the Sans Pareil and Jaloux.

ALTHOUGH three of the frigates were launched in 1797, neither was quite ready for service when the necessities of the country required

that vessels should be sent to sea. The want of suitable spars and guns, and other naval stores, fit for the ships of size, had retarded the labour on the frigates, while vessels had been readily bought for the sloops of war, which, though deficient in many of the qualities and conveniences of regular cruisers, were made to answer the exigencies of the times. Among others that had been thus provided, was an Indiaman, called the *Ganges*. Retaining her name, this vessel was brought into the service, armed and equipped as a 24, and put under the command of Captain Richard Dale, who was ordered to sail on a cruise on the 22d of May. This ship, then, was the first man-of-war that ever got to sea under the present organisation of the navy, or since the United States have existed under the constitution. Captain Dale was instructed to do no more than pertain generally to the authority of a vessel of war, that is cruising on the coast of the country to which she belongs, in a time of peace; the law that empowered seizures not passing until a few days after he had sailed. His cruising ground extended from the east end of Long Island to the capes of Virginia, with a view to cover, as much as possible, the three important ports of Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York, and, in anticipation of the act of the 28th of May, Captain Dale was directed to appear off the capes of the Delaware on the 12th of June, to receive new orders. On that day, instructions were accordingly sent to him to capture all French cruisers that were hovering on the coast with hostile views on the American commerce, and to recapture any of their prizes he might happen to fall in with.

The *Constellation* 38, Captain Truxtun, and the *Delaware* 20, Captain Decatur, next went to sea, early in June, under the last of the foregoing orders, and with directions to cruise to the southward of Cape Henry, as far as the coast of Florida. When a few days out, the *Delaware* fell in with the French privateer schooner *Le Croyable* 14, with a crew of 70 men. Being satisfied that this vessel had already made several prizes, and that she was actually cruising on soundings, in search of more, Captain Decatur took her, and sent her into the *Delaware*. As the law directing the capture of all armed French vessels passed soon after her arrival, *Le Croyable* was condemned, and bought into the navy. She was called the *Retaliation* and the command of her was given to Lieutenant Bainbridge.

Le Croyable was, consequently, not only the first capture made, in what it is usual to term the French war of 1798, but she was the first vessel ever taken by the present navy, or under the present form of government.

The activity employed by the administration, as well as by the navy, now astonished those who had so long been accustomed to believe the American people disposed to submit to any insult, in preference to encountering the losses of war. The *United States* 44, Captain Barry, went to sea early in July, and proceeded to cruise to the eastward. The ship carried out with her many young gentlemen, who have since risen to high rank and distinction in the service.*

* The first lieutenant on this cruise, was Mr. Ross; second lieutenant, Mr. Mullony; third lieutenant, Mr. James Barron; fourth lieutenant, Mr. Charles

But the law of the 9th of that month, occurring immediately afterwards, the government altered its policy entirely, and determined to send at once, a strong force among the West India islands, where the enemy abounded, and where the commerce of the country was most exposed to his depredations. On the 11th, instructions were sent to Captain Barry, who now hoisted a broad pennant, to go off Cape Cod, with the Delaware 20, Captain Decatur, where he would find the Herald 18, Captain Sever, that officer preferring active service in a small vessel, to waiting for the frigate to which he had been appointed, and then to proceed directly to the West Indies, keeping to windward.

That well known frigate, the Constitution 44, had been launched at Boston, September 20th, 1797; and she first got under way, July 20th of this year, under Captain Samuel Nicholson, who, in August, with four revenue vessels in company, was directed to cruise on the coast, to the southward of Cape Henry.* These revenue vessels were generally brigs, between one hundred and fifty and two hundred tons measurement, with armaments varying from ten to fourteen guns, and crews of from fifty to seventy men. At the close of the year, many of them were taken into the navy, and we find some of their officers, soon after the commencement of the contest, in the command of frigates. The celebrated Preble is first seen in actual service, as the commander of one of these revenue vessels, though his rank was that of lieutenant commandant, and he had been previously attached to the Constitution, as one of her officers.

Early in August, the Constellation 38, Captain Truxtun, and the Baltimore 20, Captain Phillips, went to the Havana, and brought a convoy of sixty sail in safety to the United States; several French cruisers then lying in the port, ready to follow the merchantmen, but for this force, the presence of which prevented them from appearing outside the castle. By the close of the year, the following force was at sea; most of the vessels being either in the West Indies, or employed in conveying between the islands and the United States.

United States' Ships at sea, during the year 1798, viz :

*United States	44,	Com. Barry.
*Constitution	44,	Capt. Nicholson.
*Constellation	38,	" Truxtun.
George Wash-		
ington	24,	" Fletcher.
*Portsmouth	24,	" M'Niel.
Merrimack	24,	" Brown.
Ganges	24,	" Tingey.
Montezuma	20,	" Murray.
Baltimore	20,	" Phillips.

Stewart. Among the midshipmen were Decatur, Somers, Caldwell, &c. &c. Messrs. Jacob Jones and Crane, joined her soon after.

* It is said that the Constitution would have been the first vessel got into the water under the new organisation, had she not stuck in an abortive attempt to launch her, at an earlier day.

	Delaware	20,	“	Decatur.
	Herald	18,	“	Russel.
	Richmond	18,	“	S. Barron.
	*Norfolk	18,	“	Williams.
	*Pinckney	18,	“	Hayward.
	Retaliation	14,	Lieut. Com.	Bainbridge.
Revenue vessels.	*Pickering	14,	Lieut. Com.	Preble
	*Eagle	14,	“	Campbell.
	*Scammel	14,	“	Adams.
	*Gov. Jay	14,	“	Leonard.
	*Virginia	14,	“	Bright.
	*Diligence	12,	“	Brown.
	*South Carolina	12,	“	Payne.
	*Gen. Green	10,	“	Price.

Of these vessels, those marked with an asterisk, were built expressly for the public service, while the remainder, with the exception of the *Retaliation*, captured from the French, were purchased. The vessels rating 20 and 24 guns, were old-fashioned sloops, with gun-decks, and carried, in general, long nines and sixes. The smaller vessels were deep-waisted, like the modern corvette, and carried light long guns. Even the frigates had, as yet, no carronades in their armaments, their quarter-deck and fore-castle batteries being long twelves and nines. The carronade was not introduced into the service, until near the close of this contest.

Besides the vessels named in the foregoing list, many more were already laid down; and so great was the zeal of the commercial towns, in particular, that no less than two frigates, and five large sloops were building by subscription, in the different principal ports of the country. In addition to this force, must be enumerated eight large galleys, that were kept on the southern coast, to defend their inlets.

The sudden exhibition of so many cruisers in the West Indies, appears to have surprised the British, as well as the common enemy; and, while the men-of-war of Great Britain, on the whole, treated their new allies with sufficient cordiality, instances were not wanting, in which a worse feeling was shown, and a very questionable policy pursued towards them. The most flagrant instance of the sort that took place, occurred in the autumn of this year, off the port of Havana, and calls for a conspicuous notice, in a work of this character.

On the morning of the 16th November, 1798, a squadron of British ships was made from the United States sloop of war *Baltimore* 20, Captain Phillips, then in charge of a convoy, bound from Charleston to the Havana. At the time, the *Moro* was in sight, and knowing that the English cruisers in those seas, were in the habit of pursuing a vexatious course towards the American merchantmen, Captain Phillips, as soon as he had ascertained the characters of the strangers, made a signal to his convoy to carry sail hard, in order to gain their port, bearing up in the *Baltimore*, at the same time, to speak the English commodore. The latter was in the

Carnatick 74, with the Queen 98, Thunderer 74, Maidstone 32, and Greyhound 32, in company. The English ships cut off three of the convoy, and captured them, probably under the plea of a blockade, or, some of their own constructions of the rights of colonial trade. When the Baltimore joined the Carnatick, Captain Loring, the commander of the latter ship, and the senior officer of the squadron, invited Captain Phillips to repair on board his vessel. On complying with this invitation, a conversation ensued between the two officers, in which Captain Loring informed his guest that he intended to take all the men out of the Baltimore, that had not regular American protections. Captain Phillips protested against such a violation of his flag, as an outrage on the dignity of the nation to which he belonged, and announced his determination to surrender his ship, should any such proceedings be insisted on.

Captain Phillips now returned on board the Baltimore, where he found a British lieutenant in the act of mustering the crew. Taking the muster-roll from his hand, Captain Phillips ordered the Carnatick's officer to walk to leeward, and sent his people to their quarters. The American commander now found himself in great doubt, as to the propriety of the course he ought to pursue. Having a legal gentleman of some reputation on board, he determined, however, to consult him, and to be influenced by his advice. The following facts appear to have been submitted to the consideration of this gentleman. The Baltimore had sailed without a commission on board her, or any paper whatever, signed by the President of the United States, and under instructions that "the vessels of every other nation (France excepted,) are on *no account* to be molested; and I wish particularly to impress on your mind, that should you ever see an American vessel captured by the armed ship of any nation at war, with whom we are at peace, you cannot lawfully interfere to prevent the capture, for it is to be taken for granted, that such nation will compensate for such capture, if it should prove to have been illegally made." We have quoted the whole of this clause, that part which is not, as well as that which is, pertinent to the point that influenced Captain Phillips, in order that the reader may understand the spirit that prevailed in the councils of the nation, at that time. There may be some question how far a belligerent can, with propriety, have any authority over a vessel that has been regularly admitted into the convoy of a national cruiser, for it is just as reasonable to suppose that a public ship of one nation would not protect an illegality by countenancing such a fraud, as to suppose that a public ship of another would not do violence to right in her seizures; and an appeal to the justice of America to deliver up an offending ship might be made quite as plausibly, as an appeal to the justice of England to restore an innocent ship. The papers of a vessel under convoy, at all events, can properly be examined nowhere but under the eyes of the commander of the convoy, or of his agent, in order that the ship examined may have the benefit of his protecting care, should the belligerent feel disposed to abuse his authority. It will be observed, however, that Captain Phillips had trusted more to the

sailing of his convoy, than to any principles of international law ; and when we inquire further into the proceedings of the British commander, it will be seen that this decision, while it may not have been as dignified and firm as comported with his official station was probably as much for the benefit of the interests he was deputed to protect, as any other course might have been.

Whatever may be thought of the rights of belligerents in regard to ships, there can be no question that the conduct of the British officer, in insisting, under the circumstances, on taking any of the Baltimore's men, was totally unjustifiable. The right of impressment is a national, and not an international right, depending solely on municipal regulations, and in no manner on public law ; since the latter can confer no privileges, that, in their nature, are not reciprocal. International law is founded on those principles of public good which are common to all forms of government, and it is not to be tolerated that one particular community should set up usages, arising out of its peculiar situation, with an attempt to exercise them at the expense of those general rules which the civilised world has recognised as necessary, paramount, and just. No principle is better settled than the one which declares that a vessel on the high seas, for all the purposes of personal rights, is within the protection of the laws of the country to which she belongs ; and England has no more authority to send an agent on board an American vessel, so situated, to claim a deserter, or a subject, than she can have a right to send a sheriff's officer to arrest a thief. If her institutions allow her to insist on the services of a particular and limited class of her own subjects, contrary to their wishes, it is no affair of other nations, so long as the exercise of this extraordinary regulation is confined to her own jurisdiction ; but when she attempts to extend it into the legal jurisdictions of other communities, she not only invades their privileges by violating a conventional right but she offends their sense of justice by making them parties to the commission of an act that is in open opposition to natural equity. In the case before us, the British commander, however, did still more, for he reversed all the known and safe principles of evidence, by declaring that he should put the accused to the proofs of their innocence, and, at once, assume that every man in the Baltimore was an Englishman, who should fail to establish the fact that he was an American.

Captain Phillips, after taking time to deliberate, determined to submit to superior force, surrender his ship, and to refer the matter to his own government. The colours of the Baltimore were accordingly lowered ; Captain Loring was informed that the ship was at his disposal, and fifty-five of the crew were immediately transferred to the Carnatick. After a short delay, however, fifty of these men were sent back, and only five were retained.

Captain Loring now made a proposition to Captain Phillips, that was as extraordinary as any part of his previous conduct, by stating that he had a number of Americans in his squadron, whom he would deliver up to the flag of their country, man for man, in exchange for as many Englishmen. These Americans, it is fair to presume, had

been impressed, and the whole of these violent outrages on neutral rights, were closed by a proposal to surrender a certain number of American citizens, who were detained against their will, and in the face of all law, to fight battles in which they had no interest, if Captain Phillips would weaken his crew by yielding an equal number of Englishmen, who had taken voluntary service under the American flag, for the consideration of a liberal bounty and ample pay.

It is scarcely necessary to say that this proposition was rejected; the American commander possessing no more authority to give up any portion of his legal crew, in this manner, than he had to insist on the services of the Americans whom he might receive in exchange. The British squadron now made sail, carrying with them the five men and the three ships. Nothing remained for Captain Phillips but to hoist his colours again, and to proceed on his cruise. On his return to America, this officer hastened to Philadelphia, and laid the whole transaction before the government, and on the 10th of January, 1799, he was dismissed from the navy without trial.

We look back on this whole transaction with mortification, regret and surprise. We feel deep mortification that, after the experience of the contest of the Revolution, the American character should have fallen so low, that an officer of any nation might dare to commit an outrage as violent as that perpetrated by the commander of the *Carnatick*, for it is fair to presume that no man would incur its responsibility with his own government, who did not feel well assured that his superiors would think the risk of a conflict with America, more than compensated by the advantages that would be thus obtained in manning the English fleets; effectually proving that it must have been the prevalent opinion of the day, America was so little disposed to insist on her rights, that in preference to putting her commerce in jeopardy, she would not only yield her claim to protect seamen under her flag generally, but under that pennant which is supposed more especially to represent national dignity and national honour. This opinion was undeniably unfounded, as regards the great majority of the American people, but it was only too true, in respect to a portion of them, who collected in towns, and sustained by the power of active wealth, have, in all ages and in all countries, been enabled to make their particular passing interests temporarily superior to those eternal principles on which nations or individuals can alone, with any due reliance, trust for character and security. In 1798, the contest with France was so much the more popular with the mercantile part of the community, because it favoured trade with England; and some now living may be surprised to learn, that a numerous and powerful class in the country, were so blinded by their interests, and perhaps misled by prejudices of a colonial origin, as actually to contend that Great Britain had a perfect right to seize her seamen wherever she could find them; a privilege that could be no more urged with reason, than to insist that Great Britain had an equal right to exercise any other municipal power that conflicted with general principles, on the plea of private necessity. An act of spirited resistance at that moment might have put a stop to the long

train of similar aggressions that followed, and which, after an age of forbearance, finally produced all the evils of the very warfare that seem to have been so much apprehended.

On this branch of the subject, no more need be said at present, than to add that while the British government did not appear disposed to defend the principle involved in the act of its officer, the American so far forgot what was done to its real interests, as not to insist on an open and signal reparation of the wrong.

The conduct of the commander of the *Baltimore* ought, in a measure, to be judged by the spirit of the day in which the event occurred, and not by the better feelings and sounder notions that now prevail on the same subject. Still, he appears to have fallen into one or two material errors. The inference put on the words "no account" in his instructions, was palpably exaggerated and feeble; since it would equally have led him to yield his ship itself, to an attack from an inferior force, should it have suited the views of the commander of any vessel but a Frenchman to make one; and the case goes to show the great importance of possessing a corps of trained and instructed officers to command vessels of war, it being as much a regular qualification in the accomplished naval captain, to be able to make distinctions that shall render him superior to sophisms of this nature, as to work his ship.

The circumstance that there was no commission, or any paper signed by the President of the United States, in the *Baltimore*, though certainly very extraordinary, and going to prove the haste with which the armaments of 1798 were made, ought to have had no influence on the decision of Captain Phillips, in the presence of a foreign ship. This officer would not have hesitated about defending his convoy, under his instructions alone, against a Frenchman; and by a similar rule, he ought not to have hesitated about defending his people against an Englishman, on the same authority. Any defect in form, connected with his papers, was a question purely national, no foreign officer having a right to enter into the examination of the matter at all, so long as there was sufficient evidence to establish the national character of the *Baltimore*, which, in extremity, might have been done by the instructions themselves; and we see in the doubts of Captain Phillips on this head, the deficiencies of a man educated in a merchantman, or a service in which clearances and registers are indispensable to legality, instead of the decision and promptitude of an officer taught from youth to rely on the dignity and power of his government, and the sanctity of his flag. The commissions of her officers do not give to a ship of war her national character, but they merely empower those who hold them to act in their several stations; the nationality of the vessel depending on the simple facts of the ownership and the duty on which she is employed. Nations create such evidence of this interest in their vessels as may suit themselves, nor can foreigners call these provisions in question, so long as they answer the great ends for which they were intended.

Different opinions have been entertained of the propriety of the course taken by Captain Phillips without reference to the grounds

of his submission. By one set of logicians he is justified in yielding without resistance, on account of the overwhelming force of the English; and by another condemned on the plea that a vessel of war should never strike her colours with her guns loaded. We think both of these distinctions false, as applied to this particular case; and the latter, as applied to most others. When the commander of a vessel of war sees no means to escape from capture, nothing is gained, either to his nation or himself, by merely firing a broadside and hauling down his colours. So far from being an act of spirit, it is the reverse, unless we concede something to the force of prejudice, since it is hazarding the lives of others, without risking his own, or those of his crew; for, to pretend that Captain Phillips should not only have discharged his guns, but have stood the fire of *Carnatick*, is to affirm that an officer ought to consummate an act of injustice in others, by an act of extreme folly of his own. We think, however, that Captain Phillips erred in not resisting in a manner that was completely within his power. When he took the muster-roll from the hands of the English lieutenant, and called his people to quarters, he became master of his own ship, and might have ordered the *Carnatick's* boat to leave it, with a message to Captain Loring, expressive of his determination to defend himself. The case was not one of war, in which there was a certainty that, resisting, he would be assailed, but an effort on the part of the commander of a ship belonging to a friendly power, to push aggression to a point that no one but himself could know. An attempt to board the *Baltimore* in boats might have been resisted, and successfully even, when credit instead of discredit would have been reflected on the service; and did the *Carnatick* open her fire, all question of blame, as respects Captain Phillips, would have been immediately settled. It may be much doubted if the British officer would have had recourse to so extreme a measure, under such circumstances; and if he had, something would have been gained, by at once placing the open hostility of a vastly superior force, between submission and disgrace.

Neither was the course pursued by the government free from censure. It is at all times a dangerous, and in scarcely no instance a necessary, practice, to cashier an officer without trial. Cases of misconduct so flagrant, may certainly occur, as to justify the executive in resorting to the prompt use of the removing power; as for cowardice in the open field, in presence of the commander-in-chief, when disgrace in face of the army or fleet, might seem as appropriate as promotion for conduct of the opposite kind; but, as a rule, no military man should suffer this heavy penalty without having the benefit of a deliberate and solemn investigation, and the judgment of those who, by their experience, may be supposed to be the most competent to decide on his conduct. The profession of an officer is the business of a life, and the utmost care of his interests and character, is the especial duty of those who are called to preside over his destinies, in a civil capacity. In the case before us, we learn the danger of precipitation and misconception in such matters, the reason given by the secretary for the dismissal of Captain Phillips being contra-

dicted by the facts, as they are now understood. In the communication of that functionary to the degraded officer, the latter was charged with "tame submission to the orders of the British lieutenant, on board your own ship;" whereas, it is alledged on the part of Captain Phillips, that he did not permit the English officer to muster his crew, but that the act was performed while he himself was on board the Carnatick.

As recently as the year 1820, an attempt was made to revive an investigation of this subject, and to restore Captain Phillips to his rank. It is due to that officer to say, many of the facts were found to be much more in his favour than had been generally believed, and that the investigation, while it failed in its principal object, tended materially to relieve his name from the opprobrium under which it had previously rested. Although many still think he erred in judgment, it is now the general impression that his mistakes were the results of a want of experience, and perhaps of the opinions of the day, rather than of any want of a suitable disposition to defend the honour of the flag. The punishment inflicted on him, appears to have been as unnecessarily severe, as it was indiscreet in its manner; and if we may set down the outrage as a fault of the times, we may also add to the same catalogue of errors, most of the other distinctive features of the entire proceedings.

It has been stated that the privateer *Le Croyable* 14, captured by the *Delaware* 20, had been taken into the service, under the name of the *Retaliation*. In November, 1798, or about the time that the *Carnatick* impressed the men of the *Baltimore*, the *Montezuma* 20, Captain Murray, *Norfolk* 18, Captain Williams, and the *Retaliation* 12, Lieutenant Bainbridge, were cruising in company off *Guadaloupé*, when three sails were made to the eastward, and soon after two more to the westward. Captain Murray, who was the senior officer, was led to suppose, from circumstances, that the vessels in the eastern board were British, and speaking the *Retaliation*, he ordered Lieutenant Bainbridge to reconnoitre them, while, with the *Norfolk* in company, he gave chase, himself, in the *Montezuma*, to the two vessels to the westward. The *Retaliation*, in obedience to these orders, immediately hauled up towards the three strangers, and getting near enough for signals, she made her own number, with a view to ascertain if they were Americans. Finding that he was not understood, Lieutenant Bainbridge mistook the strangers for English cruisers, knowing that several were on the station, and unluckily permitted them to approach so near, that when their real characters were ascertained, it was too late to escape. The leading ship, a French frigate, was an uncommonly fast sailer, and she was soon near enough to open her fire. It was not long before another frigate came up, when the *Retaliation* was compelled to lower her flag. Thus did this unlucky vessel become the first cruiser taken by both parties, in this war. The frigates by which the *Retaliation* was captured, proved to be the *Volontaire* 36, and the *Insurgente* 32, the former carrying 44, and the latter 40 guns. Mr. Bainbridge was put on board the *Volontaire*, while the *Insurgente*, perceiving that the

schooner was safe, continued to carry sail in chase of the *Montezuma* and *Norfolk*. As soon as a prize crew could be thrown into the *Retaliation*, the *Volontaire* crowded sail after her consort. The chase now became exceedingly interesting, the two American vessels being fully aware, by the capture of the schooner, that they had to deal with an enemy. The *Insurgente* was one of the fastest ships in the world, and her commander an officer of great skill and resolution. The two American vessels were small for their rates, and, indeed, were overrated, the *Montezuma* being a little ship of only 347 tons, and the *Norfolk* a brig of 200. Their armaments were merely nines and sixes; shot that would be scarcely regarded in a conflict with frigates. The officers of the *Volontaire* collected on the fore-castle of their ship to witness the chase, and the *Insurgente* being, by this time, a long way ahead, Captain St. Laurent, the commander of the *Volontaire*, asked Mr. Bainbridge, who was standing near him, what might be the force of the two American vessels. With great presence of mind, Mr. Bainbridge answered without hesitation, that the ship carried 28 twelves, and the brig 20 nines. As this account quite doubled the force of the Americans, Captain St. Laurent, who was senior to the commander of the *Insurgente*, immediately threw out a signal to the latter to relinquish the chase. This was an unmilitary order, even admitting the fact to have been as stated, for the *Insurgente* would have been fully able to employ two such vessels until the *Volontaire* could come up; but the recent successes of the English had rendered the French cruisers wary, and the Americans and English, as seamen, were probably identified in the minds of the enemy. The signal caused as much surprise to Captain Murray, in the *Montezuma*, as to Captain Barreault, of the *Insurgente*, for the latter, an excellent and spirited officer, had got so near his chases as to have made out their force, and to feel certain of capturing both. The signal was obeyed, however, and the *Montezuma* and *Norfolk* escaped.

When the two French vessels rejoined each other, Captain Barreault naturally expressed his surprise at having been recalled under such circumstances. An explanation followed when the *ruse* that had been practised by Mr. Bainbridge was discovered. It is to the credit of the French officers, that, while they were much vexed at the results of this artifice, they never visited the offender with their displeasure.

It is one of the curious incidents of this singular contest, that a proposition was made to Mr. Bainbridge, by the Governor of Guadalupe, into which place the two French frigates went with their prize, to restore the *Retaliation*, a vessel captured from the French themselves, and to liberate her crew, provided he would stipulate that the island should remain neutral during the present state of things. This proposition Mr. Bainbridge had no authority to accept, and the termination of a long and prevaricating negotiation on the part of the governor, whose object was probably to enrich his particular command, or himself, by possessing for a time, a monopoly of the American trade, was to send the *Retaliation* back to America as a cartel;

for, now that the United States had taken so bold a stand, the French government appeared even less anxious than our own, to break out into open war. On the arrival of Mr. Bainbridge in this country, his conduct received the approbation of the administration, and he was immediately promoted to the rank of master commandant, and appointed to the Norfolk 18, one of the vessels he had saved from the enemy by his presence of mind.

The efforts of the Governor of Guadaloupe to obtain a neutrality for his own island, had been accompanied by some acts of severity towards his prisoners, into which he had suffered himself to be led, apparently with the hope that it might induce Mr. Bainbridge to accept his propositions; and that officer now reported the whole of the proceedings to his own government. The result was an act authorising retaliation on the persons of Frenchmen, should there be any recurrence of similar wrongs. This law gave rise to some of the earliest of those disgraceful party dissensions which, in the end, reduced the population of the whole country, with very few exceptions, to be little more than partisans of either French or English aggressions.

The United States 44, and Delaware 20, captured the privateers Sans Pareil 16, and Jaloux 14, in the course of the autumn, and sent them in.

Thus terminated the year 1798, though the return of the Retaliation did not occur until the commencement of 1799, leaving the United States with a hastily collected, an imperfectly organised, and unequally disciplined squadron of ships, it is true; but a service that contained the germ of all that is requisite to make an active, an efficient, and a glorious marine.

CHAPTER XVI.

Naval force—Character of the different vessels—their distribution in the service—Captures made by the respective squadrons—The Constitution, Com. Truxtun, captures l'Insurgente—Critical situation of the prize crew—Action of the Constitution with La Vengeance—Loss of midshipman Jarvis—Com. Truxtun receives a gold medal—Exploit of Lieut. Hull—Loss of l'Insurgente and the Pickering with all their crews—Captures by the Enterprise, Lieut. Comdt. Shaw—by the Boston, Capt. Little—Brief catalogue of prizes taken on the West India station—Spirited engagement of the Experiment, Lieut. Comdt. Maley, with the picaroons—Lieut. Comdt. Stewart captures the Deux Amis and la Diane—his unfortunate engagement with the (British privateer) Louisa Bridger—Capt. Bainbridge, in the George Washington, goes to Algiers with tribute—The demands of the Dey—Capt. B.'s decision—he forces through the Dardanelles—his reception at Constantinople—return to Algiers—handsome conduct to the French—he returns home and is transferred to the Essex—Peace concluded with France.

The year 1799 opened with no departure from the policy laid down by the government, and the building and equipping of the different ships in various parts of the country, were pressed with as much dili-

gence as the public resources would then allow. In the course of this season, many vessels were launched, and most of them got to sea within the year. Including all, those that were employed in 1798, those that were put in commission early in the ensuing year, and those that were enabled to quit port nearer to its close, the entire active naval force of the United States, in 1799, would seem to have been composed of the following vessels, viz :

United States	44,	Delaware	20,
Constitution	44,	Baltimore	20,
Congress	38,	Patapsco	20,
Constellation	38,	Maryland	20,
Essex	32,	Herald	18,
General Greene	28,	Norfolk	18,
Boston	28,	Richmond	18,
Adams	28,	Pinckney	18,
John Adams	28,	Warren	18,
Portsmouth	24,	Eagle	18,
Connecticut	24,	Pickering	14,
Ganges	24,	Augusta	14,
Geo. Washington	24,	Scammel	14,
Merrimack	24,	Enterprise	12.

To these must be added a few revenue vessels, though most of this description of cruisers appear to have been kept on the coast throughout this year. As yet, the greatest confusion and irregularity prevailed in the rating, no uniform system appearing to have been adopted. The vessels built by the different cities, and presented to the public, in particular, were rated too high, from a natural desire to make the offering as respectable as possible ; and it does not appear to have been thought expedient, on the part of the government, prematurely to correct the mistakes. But the department itself was probably too little instructed to detect the discrepancies, and some of them continued to exist as long as the ships themselves. It may help the reader in appreciating the characters of the different vessels, if we explain some of these irregularities, as a specimen of the whole.

The United States and Constitution, as has been elsewhere said, were large ships, with batteries of 30 twenty-four-pounders on their gun-decks, and were appropriately rated as forty-fours. The Congress and Constellation were such ships as the English were then in the practice of rating as thirty-eights, being eighteen-pounder frigates, of the largest size. The Essex was the only ship in the navy that was properly rated as a thirty-two, having a main-deck battery of 26 twelves, though she was a large vessel of her class. The John Adams, General Greene, Adams, and Boston, were such ships as the British had been accustomed to rate as twenty-eights, and the two latter were small ships of this denomination. The George Washington, though she appears as only a twenty-four, while the Boston figured as a thirty-two, was, as near as can now be ascertained by the officially reported tonnage, more than a fourth larger than the latter ship. Indeed, it may be questioned if the Boston ought to have been rated higher than a twenty-four, the Connecticut which

was thus classed, being thirty tons larger. It ought, however, to be remarked, that differences in the rule of measuring tonnage, had prevailed in different colonies among the shipwrights, as they are known still to exist in different nations, and it is probable that some confusion may have entered into these reports, in consequence of the want of uniformity. It may be added, that the smaller vessels generally were light of their respective rates, and were by no means to be estimated by those of similar rates, at the present day.

At the close of the year 1798, the active force in the West Indies had been distributed into four separate squadrons in the following manner.

One squadron under Commodore Barry, who was the senior officer of the service, cruised to the windward, running as far south as Tobago, and consisted of the vessels about to be named, viz :

United States	44,	Com. Barry.
Constitution	44,	Capt. Nicholson.
George Washington	24,	" Fletcher.
Merrimack	24,	" Brown.
Portsmouth	24,	" M'Niell.
Herald	18,	Master Com. Russel.
Pickering	14,	Lieut. Com. Preble.
Eagle	15,	" Campbell.
Scammel	14,	" Adams.
Diligence	12,	" Brown.

This force was now kept actively employed, the ships passing from point to point, with orders to make a general rendezvous at Prince Rupert's Bay. This squadron made several captures, principally of privateers, and as none of them were accompanied by incidents deserving of particular mention, they may be recorded together, though occurring at different periods. The United States 44, Commodore Barry, captured l'Amour de la Patrie 6, with 80 men, and le Tartuffe 8, with 60 men. The Merrimack 24, Captain Brown, la Magicienne 14, with 63 men, and le Bonaparte. The Portsmouth 24, Captain M'Niell, le Fripon, and l'Ami 6, with 16 men. The Eagle 14, Captain Campbell, le Bon Père 6, with 52 men.

A second squadron, under the orders of Captain Truxtun, had its rendezvous at St. Kitts, and cruised as far to leeward as Porto Rico. It consisted of the

Constellation	38,	Com. Truxtun.
Baltimore	20,	Capt. Phillips.
Richmond	18,	" S. Barron.
Norfolk	18,	" Williams.
Virginia	14,	" Bright.

The Baltimore took l'Esperance, and was present at the capture of la Sirène 4, with 36 men. This ship was put under the command of Captain Barron, soon after the dismissal of Captain Phillips from the service, and before the close of the season was commanded by Captain Cowper. The Constellation took la Diligente and l'Union.

A small force under the orders of Captain Tingey, watched the passage between Cuba and St. Domingo. It consisted of the

Ganges	24,	Capt. Tingey.
Pinckney	18,	“ Hayward.
South Carolina	12,	“ Payne.

The Ganges took le Vengeur 6, la Rabateuse, l'Eugene, and l'Esperance 8.

The Delaware 20, Captain Decatur, with the revenue vessels Governor Jay 14, and General Greene 10, was directed to cruise in the vicinity of the Havana, to protect the trade on the coast of Cuba. The Delaware captured the Marsuin 10, and the same ship, later in the season, under the orders of Captain Baker, took le Renard and l'Ocean. The Montezuma 20, Captain Murray, after the capture of the Retaliation, and the return of the Norfolk 18, to America, cruised some time alone, taking a small privateer of six guns.

Although the year commenced with this disposition of the vessels, many changes occurred, as the new ships were got to sea, and particularly on account of the great mistake of shipping the crews for a term as short as one year. It followed, of course, that the vessels which sailed in July and August, 1798, for the West India station, if called there by no other cause, were compelled to return home in the summer of 1799, to discharge their crews, and to obtain others in their places. It was fortunate that the spirit of the times, the absence of privateers, and an abundance of men, in some measure, remedied this defect, and that the delays it caused were not as material as might have been otherwise apprehended.

On the 9th of February, the Constellation 38, Commodore Truxtun, was cruising on her prescribed ground, Nevis bearing W. S. W., distant five leagues, when she made a large ship in the southern board. The Constellation being to windward at the moment, Commodore Truxtun ran down towards the stranger, who now set American colours, when the private signals were shown. As the chase was unable to answer, he seemed to think further disguise unnecessary, for he hoisted the French ensign, and fired a gun to windward, by way of a challenge, keeping under easy sail, to invite the contest. This was the first opportunity that had occurred since the close of the Revolution, for an American vessel of war, to get alongside of an enemy, of a force likely to render a combat certain, and the officers and men of the Constellation displayed the greatest eagerness to engage. On the other hand, the stranger betrayed no desire to disappoint his enemy, waiting gallantly for her to come down. When the Constellation had got abeam of the French frigate, and so near as to have been several times hailed, she opened her fire, which was returned promptly and with spirit. The Constellation drew gradually ahead, both ships maintaining a fierce cannonade. The former suffered most in her sails and rigging, and while under the heaviest of the fire of her antagonist, the fore-top-mast was badly wounded, quite near the lower cap. The fore-top was commanded by Mr. David Porter, a midshipman of great promise, and finding that his hails to communicate this important circumstance were disregarded, in the heat of the combat, this young officer took on himself the responsibility of cutting the stoppers and of lowering the yard. By thus

relieving the spar of the pressure of the sail, he prevented the fall of the top-mast and all its hamper. In the mean time the weight and effect of the fire were altogether in favour of the *Constellation*, and notwithstanding the injury she received in her fore-topmast, that ship was soon able to throw in two or three raking broadsides, which decided the combat. After maintaining a close contest, in this manner, of about an hour, the *Constellation* shot out of the smoke, wore round, and hauling athwart her antagonist's stern was ready again with every gun to rake her, when the enemy struck.

The prize proved to be the French frigate *l'Insurgente*, Captain Barreault, the vessel that has already been mentioned, as having captured the *Retaliation*, and chasing the *Montezuma* and *Norfolk*, and one of the fastest ships in the world. She was much cut up, and had sustained a loss of 70 men, in killed and wounded; 29 of the former, and 41 of the latter. The *Constellation*, besides the loss of the fore-top-mast, which had to be shifted, was much damaged aloft, suffering no material injury in her hull, however, and had only 3 men wounded. Among the latter, was Mr. James M'Donough, a midshipman, who had a foot shot off. Early in the combat, one of the men flinched from his gun, and he was killed by the third lieutenant, to whose division he belonged.

The *Insurgente's* armament consisted of 40 guns, French twelves, on her main-deck battery, and her complement of men was 409. She was a ship a little heavier than a regular 32, which would probably have been her rate in the English marine, although a French twelve-pound shot weighs nearly thirteen English pounds. On this occasion, the *Constellation* is said to have carried but 38 guns, twelve less than have been put upon her since the introduction of carronades, and she had a crew of 309 men. But the main-deck battery of the *Constellation* was composed of twenty-fours, a gun altogether too heavy for her size and strength, and from which she was relieved at the termination of this cruise, by exchanging her armament for eighteens.*

The result of this engagement produced great exultation in America, and it was deemed a proof of an aptitude to nautical service, that was very grateful to the national pride. Without pausing to examine details, the country claimed it as a victory of a 38 over a 40; and the new marine was, at once, proclaimed to be equal to any in the world; a decision somewhat hazardous when made on a single experiment, and which was certainly formed without a full understanding of the whole subject. It is due to a gallant enemy, to say that Captain Barreault, who defended his ship as long as there was a hope of success, was overcome by a superior force; and it is also due to Commodore Truxtun, and to those under his command, to add that they did their work with an expedition and effect every way proportioned to the disparity in their favour. There is scarcely an instance on record, (we are not certain there is one,) of a full-manned frigate, carrying twelves, prevailing in a contest with even a ship of eighteens;

*See note B, end of volume.

and, in this instance, we see that the *Insurgente* had twenty-fours to oppose. Victory was next to hopeless, under such circumstances, though, on the other hand, we are not to overlook the readiness with which a conflict with an unknown antagonist was sought, and the neatness and despatch with which the battle was won.

The *Insurgente* struck about half past three in the afternoon, and Mr. Rodgers,* the first lieutenant of the *Constellation*, together with Mr. Porter,† and eleven men, were thrown on board her, to take possession, and to superintend the removal of the prisoners. It began to blow, and when the darkness rendered it necessary to defer the duty, 173 of the prize's crew were still in her. The wind continued to rise, and, notwithstanding every effort, the ships separated in the darkness.

The situation of Mr. Rodgers was now exceedingly critical. The vessel was still covered with the wreck, while the wounded, and even the dead were lying scattered about her decks, and the prisoners early discovered a disposition to rise. The gratings had been thrown overboard by the people of the *Insurgente* after she struck, and no handcuffs could be found. Fortunately, Mr. Rodgers was a man of great personal resolution, and of herculean strength, while Mr. Porter, though young and comparatively slight, was as good a second, in such trying circumstances, as any one could desire. As soon as it was ascertained that the prisoners could not be got out of the ship that night, they were all sent into the lower hold, the fire-arms were secured, and a sentinel was placed at each hatchway, armed to the teeth, with positive orders to shoot every man who should attempt to appear on deck, without permission. In this awkward situation, Mr. Rodgers and his party continued three days, unable to sleep, compelled to manage a frigate, and to watch their prisoners, with the utmost vigilance, as the latter were constantly on the look-out for an opportunity to retake the ship. At the end of that time, they carried the *Insurgente*, in triumph, into St. Kitts, where they found that the *Constellation* had already arrived.

Mr. Rodgers and Mr. Cowper, the first and second lieutenants of the *Constellation*, were soon after promoted to be captains, great irregularity existing in the service, at that day, on subjects of this nature. The rank of master commandant had been established, but the government appeared to think that it was still organising a marine, and it was empowered to exercise its discretion, in transferring officers at will, from one grade to another, so long as no one was reduced from a former station. Captain Rodgers was appointed to the *Maryland* 20, and Captain Cowper to the *Baltimore* 20.

One of the effects of the victory of the *Constellation* was to render the navy still more popular, and the most respectable families of the nation discovered greater anxiety than ever to get their sons enrolled on their lists. The new ships were put into the water as fast as possible, and, as soon as manned and equipped, were sent on the different cruising grounds. *L'Insurgente* was taken into the service as a

* Late Commodore Rodgers.

† Late Commodore Porter.

thirty-six, the command of her was given to Captain Murray, late of the *Montezuma 20*, and she was permitted to cruise with a roving commission.

In the mean time, the care of the government appeared to extend itself, and it began to cast its eyes beyond the hazards of the American seas.

At the close of the year, the Congress 38, Captain Sever, and Essex 32, Captain Preble, sailed with orders to convoy vessels as far as Batavia. The former of these vessels met with an accident to which all new ships are liable on quitting America in the winter. Her rigging having been set up in cold weather, it became slack when she got into the gulf stream, where she also encountered a strong southerly gale, and she lost not only all her masts, but her bowsprit. The main-mast went while Mr. Bosworth, the fourth lieutenant, was aloft, endeavouring to lower the main-topmast, by which accident that officer was lost. The crew of the top were all happily saved.*

The Congress returned to port, for repairs, but Captain Preble proceeded on his cruise, carrying the pennant, for the first time, in a regular cruiser, to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope.

The active measures resorted to by the American government having better disposed that of France to negotiate, and pledges having been given that new ministers would be received with more respect than had been shown to those last sent, who had met with insults and neglect, the United States 44, Commodore Barry, sailed from Newport, Rhode Island, on the 3d of November, having on board envoys to the French Directory. Notwithstanding these measures to obtain peace, Congress proceeded in the legislation necessary to establish a marine. Many of the laws for the government of the navy were amended, and new regulations were introduced as substitutes for such of the old ones as were found defective. The appropriation for the support of the navy, during the year 1800, the marine corps included, amounted to \$2,482,953 90.

The new year consequently opened with increased efforts to continue the singular war that had now existed eighteen months. Many acquisitions were made to the navy, and the following is a list of the vessels that appear to have been employed in the course of the season, principally in the West Indies, viz :

United States	44,	President	44,
Constitution	44,	Constellation	38,
Congress	38,	Delaware	20,
Chesapeake	38,	Baltimore	20,
Philadelphia	38,	Maryland	20,

* A similar accident was near occurring to the United States 44, in her first cruise, under Commodore Barry. After the ship got into the gulf stream, the rigging slackened, when she was scudding ten knots in a gale, and rolling nearly gunwale to. While all on board were trembling for the masts, Mr. James Barron, the third lieutenant, proposed to Commodore Barry to set up the rigging, confidently declaring his ability to do so. This bold offer was accepted, and Mr. Barron got purchases on every other shroud, and by swaying together at the call, under the vigilant superintendence of the officers, this delicate undertaking was accomplished with success, and the ship's masts were saved. It ought to be remembered that few of the masts in this war were made, but that they were mostly single sticks.

New York	36,	Patapsco	20,
Insurgente	36,	Herald	18,
Essex	32,	Norfolk	18,
General Greene	28,	Richmond	18,
Adams	28,	Pinckney	18,
John Adams	28,	Warren	18,
Boston	28,	Eagle	14,
Geo. Washington	24,	Pickering	14,
Connecticut	24,	Augusta	14,
Ganges	24,	Scammel	14,
Trumbull	24,	Enterprise	12,
Portsmouth	24,	Experiment	12.
Merrimaek	24,		

By this time, the revenue vessels, with the exception of one or two, appear to have been retained at home, and in the foregoing list, no mention is made of galleys. Laws had been previously passed for the construction of six seventy-fours, and contracts were already made for the collection of the necessary materials.

The cruising portion of the vessels were distributed in two principal squadrons, the one on the St. Domingo station under the orders of Commodore Talbot, whose broad pennant was flying in the Constitution 44, and the other on the Guadaloupe station, under the orders, first of Commodore Truxtun, in the Constellation 38, and next under the orders of Commodore Decatur, in the Philadelphia 38. The force of the former varied from seven to twelve vessels, while the latter, in April, consisted of thirteen sail.

Notwithstanding this exhibition of a respectable and active force, the great facilities offered by the islands, and the strong temptations that were to be found in the American West India trade, then one of the most considerable of the country, induced the enemy to be constantly on the alert, and the seas were still swarming with French cruisers, principally privateers. Guadaloupe, in particular, was distinguished for the number of captures made by its vessels; and it was for this reason that we now find the heaviest American squadron cruising in that vicinity.

On the 1st of February, 1800, the Constellation 38, Commodore Truxtun, was again off the island of Guadaloupe, alone, Basseterre being east five leagues, when a sail was seen to the southeast, steering westward. Commodore Truxtun at first supposed the ship in sight to be a large English merchantman, from Martinico, of which he had some knowledge, and, unwilling to be drawn to leeward of his cruising ground, he hoisted English colours, by way of inducing her to run down and speak him. This invitation being disregarded, sail was made in chase, the Constellation gaining fast on the stranger. As the former drew nearer, the ship to leeward was discovered to be a French vessel of war, when the English colours were hauled down, and the Constellation cleared for action. The chase was now distinctly made out to be a heavy frigate mounting 52 guns. As her metal was in all probability equal to her rate, the only circumstance to equalise this disparity against the Constellation, was the fact that

the stranger was very deep which was accounted for by a practice of sending valuable articles to France, at that time, in the ships of war, as the safest means of transmission. Commodore Truxtun was not discouraged by his discovery, but continued to carry every stitch of canvass that would draw. Towards noon, however, the wind became light, and the enemy had the advantage in sailing. In this manner, with variable breezes, and a smooth sea, the chase continued until noon on the 2d, when the wind freshened, and the *Constellation* again drew ahead. By the middle of the afternoon, the wind had every appearance of standing, and the chase was rising fast. It was eight in the evening, nevertheless, before the two ships were within speaking distance of each other, the stranger having come up to the wind a little, and the *Constellation* doubling on her weather quarter. Commodore Truxtun was about to speak to the enemy, when the latter opened a fire from his stern and quarter guns. In a few moments the *Constellation*, having drawn still more on the weather quarter of the chase, poured in a broadside, and the action began in earnest. It was a little past eight when the firing commenced, and it was maintained with vigour until near one in the morning, the two ships, most of the time, running free, side by side, when the stranger hauled up, and drew out of the combat. Orders were given on board the *Constellation* to brace up in chase; but at this moment, a report was brought to Commodore Truxtun that the main-mast was supported almost solely by the wood, every shroud having been shot away, and many of them so repeatedly cut as to render the use of stoppers impossible. At that time, as has been said already, masts were usually, in the American navy, of single sticks, and the spars, when they gave way, went altogether. Aware of this danger, Commodore Truxtun ordered the men from the guns, to secure this all-important mast, with the hope of getting alongside of his enemy again, and, judging by the feebleness of her resistance for the last hour, with the certainty of taking her, could this object be effected. But no exertion, could obviate the calamity, the mast coming by the board within a few minutes after the enemy had sheered off. All the topmen, including Mr. Jarvis, the midshipman in command aloft, went over the side with the spars, and, that gallant young officer, who had refused to abandon his post, with all but one man, was lost.

The *Constellation* was no longer in a situation to resume the action, and her enemy was in a far worse condition, with the exception that she still retained spars enough to enable her to escape. Finding it impossible to reach any friendly port to windward, as soon as the wreck was clear of his ship, Commodore Truxtun bore up for Jamaica, where he arrived in safety.

In this close and hard-fought action, the *Constellation* had 14 men killed and 25 wounded, 11 of the latter dying of their injuries. Her antagonist afterwards got into Curaçoa, dismasted, and in a sinking condition, reporting herself to have had 50 of her people killed, and 110 wounded, in an engagement with the *Constellation*, that had lasted five hours within pistol-shot. This statement is now known to be essentially true, and it enables us to form a comparative esti-

mate of the merits of the action. The French vessel proved to be *la Vengeance*, Captain Pitot.

The armament of the *Constellation* had been changed since her action with the *Insurgente*, and her main-deck battery now consisted of 28 eighteens, and she had 10 twenty-four-pound carronades on her quarter-deck, which were among the first, if not the very first guns of this description ever introduced into the American navy. Her crew was composed of 310 souls.

It is said that the force of *la Vengeance* has been ascertained to have been 28 eighteens, 16 twelves, and 8 forty-two-pound carronades. Her crew has been variously stated as having been between 400 and 500 men. The metal was all according to the French mode of weighing, which adds one pound to every twelve.*

There is no question that the *Constellation* engaged a materially superior force, or any doubt that she would have brought *la Vengeance* into port, but for the loss of the mast. It is even said, that *la Vengeance* did strike her colours three times, during the action, but finding that the *Constellation* continued her fire, they were re-hoisted. If such an event occurred, it must have arisen from the fact that it was not perceived in the obscurity of the night.

Commodore Truxtun gained a great name by this action, and, on his return to America for repairs, he was appointed to the President 44, then fitting for sea. Congress gave him a gold medal for his good conduct, and the gallantry of Mr. Jarvis was approved in a solemn resolution. The *Constellation* was now given to Captain Murray, who had just returned from a short cruise in the *Insurgente*, and that officer went in her to the West Indies, where she joined the squadron under Commodore Talbot.

The latter officer had been cruising for some months on the St. Domingo station, and about this time he planned an expedition that was quite in character with his own personal enterprises during the war of the Revolution.

It was ascertained that a valuable French letter of marque, was lying in Port au Platte, a small harbour on the Spanish side of the

* Various statements have been given of the construction of *la Vengeance*, as well as of her armament. The papers of the day contain an account of a Mr. James Howe, who was a prisoner on board her during the action, and who is said to have brought in with him a certificate from Captain Pitot, that he and the other prisoners on board, 36 in number, refused to fight against their country, when the ship engaged. According to the statement of this witness, *la Vengeance* carried on her gun-deck 32 eighteens, 2 of which were mounted aft; on her quarter-deck, 4 long twelves and 12 thirty six-pound brass carronades; and on her fore-castle, 6 twelves; making in all 54, and a broadside of 26 guns. Her crew is stated at 400 men, including a good many passengers, all of whom were mustered at quarters. *La Vengeance* was described by Mr. Howe as having suffered severely, having received 186 round shot in her hull. The slaughter on board was terrible.

This account has much about it that is probable. The presence of Mr. Howe was authenticated by the certificate; the stern-guns agree with Commodore Truxtun's account of the commencement of the action; and the armament is very much what would have been used by a heavy French frigate of the day, on board of which carronades had been introduced. A report that she was a ship on two decks, which was current at the time, may very well have arisen from the circumstance of her carrying so many guns on her quarter-deck and fore-castle; but it is probable that Commodore Truxtun would have reported her as a two-decker, had such been the fact. The number of the crew is a circumstance in which a passenger might very well be mistaken; and it is well known the French were in the practice of over-manning, rather than of undermanning their ships.

Island of St. Domingo, and as she was a dangerous ship on account of her sailing, Commodore Talbot determined to attempt cutting her out. This vessel had been the British packet the *Sandwich*, and she only waited to complete a cargo of coffee, to make a run for France. The legality of the enterprise was more than questionable, but the French picaroons received so much favour in the Spanish colonies, that the American officers were less scrupulous than they might otherwise have been.

As soon as it was determined to make the effort, Mr. Hull, the first lieutenant of the *Constitution* went in, at night, with one of the frigate's cutters, and reconnoitred. Commodore Talbot was compelled to defer the expedition, for want of a proper craft to avoid suspicion, when fortunately one was found by accident. An American sloop called the *Sally* had been employed on the coast of the island, under circumstances that rendered her liable to detention, and she was brought out of one of the small French ports, by a boat of the frigate. This sloop had recently left Port Platte, with an intention of soon returning there, and she, at once, afforded all the facilities that could be desired.

Commodore Talbot, accordingly, threw a party of seamen and marines into the *Sally*, and giving the command to Mr. Hull, that officer was directed to proceed on the duty without further delay. The sloop was manned at sea, to escape detection, and she sailed at an hour that would enable her to reach Port Platte, about noon of the succeeding day. In the course of the night, while running down for her port, under easy sail, a shot suddenly flew over the *Sally*, and, soon after, an English frigate ranged up alongside. Mr. Hull hove to, and when the boarding lieutenant got on the sloop's deck, where he found so large a party of men and officers in naval uniforms, he was both startled and surprised. He was told the object of the expedition, however, and expressed his disappointment, as his own ship was only waiting to let the *Sandwich* complete her cargo, in order to cut her out also!

The *Sally*'s movements were so well timed, as to permit her to arrive off the harbour's mouth at the proper hour. The *Sandwich* was lying with her broadside bearing on the approach, and there was a battery at no great distance to protect her. As soon as near enough to be seen, Mr. Hull sent most of his people below, and getting an anchor ready over the stern, to bring the sloop up with, he stood directly for the enemy's bows. So admirably was every thing arranged, that no suspicion was excited, the *Sally* ran the *Sandwich* aboard, the *Constitution*'s people went into her, and carried her without the loss of a man. At the same moment, Captain Carmick landed with the marines, entered the battery, and spiked the guns.

Notwithstanding a great commotion on shore, the Americans now went to work to secure their prize. The *Sandwich* was stripped to a girtline, and every thing was below. Before sunset she had royal yards across, her guns scaled, her new crew quartered, and soon after she weighed, beat out of the harbour, and joined the frigate.

No enterprise of the sort was ever executed with greater steadiness,

or discipline. Mr. Hull gained great credit by the neatness with which he fulfilled his orders, and it was not possible for an officer to have been better sustained; the absence of loss, in all cases of surprise, in which the assailed have the means of resistance, being one of the strongest proofs not only of the gallantry and spirit, but of the coolness of the assailants.

In the end, however, this capture, which was clearly illegal, cost the Constitution dear. Not only was the Sandwich given up, but all the prize money of the cruise went to pay damages.

Early in May the Chesapeake 38, went to sea, under the command of Captain S. Barron. Her first duty was to convey a quantity of specie from Charleston to Philadelphia, after which she proceeded to cruise between the coast and the West India islands.

The Insurgente 36, had been given to Captain Fletcher, when Captain Murray was transferred to the Constellation, and in July she sailed on a cruise, with instructions to keep between longitudes 66° and 68° , and to run as far south as 30° N. L. After this ship left the capes of Virginia, no authentic accounts, with the exception of a few private letters sent in by vessels spoken at sea, were ever received of her. She had been ordered to cruise a short time in the latitude and longitude mentioned, after which her commander was left at liberty to pursue his own discretion, provided he returned to Annapolis within eight weeks. Forty-six years have elapsed and no further tidings of any belonging to this ill-fated ship have ever reached their friends.

The Pickering 14, Captain Hillar, also sailed in August, for the Guadaloupe station, and never returned. As in the case of the Insurgente, all on board perished, no information that could be relied on ever having been obtained of the manner in which these vessels were lost. Vague rumours were set afloat at the time, and it was even affirmed that they had run foul of each other in a gale, a tale that was substantiated by no testimony, and which was probably untrue, as the Pickering was sent to a station, which the Insurgente, under discretionary orders, would be little apt to seek, since it was known to be already filled with American cruisers. These two ships swelled the list of vessels of war that had been lost in this manner to three, viz: the Saratoga 16, the Insurgente 36, and the Pickering 14; to which may be added the Reprisal 16, though the cook of the latter sloop was saved.

The nature of the warfare, which was now confined principally to chases and conflicts with small fast-sailing privateers, and a species of corsair that went by the local name of picaroons, or with barges that ventured no great distance at sea, soon satisfied the government that, to carry on the service to advantage, it required a species of vessel different from the heavy, short, sloop of twenty, or twenty-four guns, of which so many were used in the beginning of the contest. Two schooners had been built with this view, and each of them fully proved their superiority over the old clumsy cruiser, that had been inherited, as it might be, from the Revolution. One of these vessels was called the Experiment, and the other the Enterprise,

and they were rated at twelve guns. The modern improvements, however, did not extend to the armaments of even these schooners, the old-fashioned six-pounder being still used, where an 18lb. carronade would now be introduced.

It was December, 1799, before the *Enterprise* got to sea, under the orders of Lt. Com. Shaw. This vessel joined the windward Island station, but falling in with the *Constellation*, 38, just after her bloody action with *la Vengeance*, Com. Truxtun ordered her to Philadelphia with his despatches. In March, however, the schooner was off Cape François, when having communicated with Com. Talbot, she proceeded to join Com. Truxtun who was supposed to be at Jamaica. Ascertaining on his way to that island, that the *Constellation* had sailed for home, Lt. Com. Shaw immediately hauled up for St. Kitts, where the windward squadron had been commanded to rendezvous.

When near the Mona Passage, on her way to her station, the *Enterprise* made a brig to the southward and eastward, and gave chase. The brig soon showed Spanish colours, the schooner keeping her own proper flag flying the whole time. Soon after showing her ensign, the brig opened on the American vessel, which had by this time got within gun-shot. Instead of returning this fire, which was continued, the *Enterprise* stood on, close hauled, until she had got well on the brig's weather quarter, when she gave a broadside in return. This was the commencement of a sharp conflict, which continued twenty minutes. At the end of that time, the vessels separated as by mutual consent, the circumstance that each still kept her proper colours flying having probably satisfied both they were not legally enemies.

The brig mounted eighteen guns and carried heavier metal than her antagonist. Both vessels suffered a good deal, though little was said of it at the time, nor does it seem to have ever been the subject of any political correspondence. It was probably regarded as one of those accidents of the sea, to which all cruisers are more or less liable, and which ought to be treated as occurrences for which no one is responsible. The spirit manifested by Lt. Com. Shaw, nevertheless, obtained for him considerable reputation in his own service, and his little schooner was considered to have done credit to her ensign. This was the first of many actions that this favourite and fortunate vessel fought during the succeeding fifteen years.

The *Enterprise*, after her rencontre with the Spanish brig, went into St. Thomas' to refit. In that port was lying a heavy French lugger, which mounted twelve guns, and which was reported to have had a crew of 600 men; the number of guns being the same as that of the American vessel, while the reported crew was about twenty more. Shortly after his arrival, Lt. Com. Shaw received a civil message from the commander of this lugger, expressing a desire to meet him outside. The challenge was accepted, and, at the specified time, the *Enterprise* stood out into the offing. Here she rounded to in waiting for her expected antagonist, but the lugger remained at her anchorage. The *Enterprise* now fired a shot, in the direction

of the harbor, as a challenge to her enemy, repeating the defiance several times, but always without effect. The schooner remained in the offing, until it was too dark to see any distance, when she bore up and ran to leeward of St. Croix. Here she cruised a day or two, capturing a small letter of marque, that struck without resistance, and with which she proceeded to St. Kitts, agreeably to order.

The Enterprise remained in port no longer than was necessary to fill up her water, and store some provisions. It was now as late as May, and a day or two out, she fell in with, and brought to action, a privateer schooner, called *la Seine*. This vessel mounted only four guns and had a crew of 54 men. She made a very gallant resistance, though the fire of the Enterprise soon compelled her to submit. So desperate was the resistance of the Frenchman, notwithstanding, and so destructive the fire of the American, that *la Seine* suffered a loss of 24 men, in killed and wounded, besides being cut to pieces in her sails and rigging. Nor did the Enterprise escape altogether uninjured. She had several men wounded, and sustained some damage, though not enough to take her into port. *La Seine* was sent to St. Kitts.

A fortnight after this encounter, the Enterprise, which had gone to leeward of Guadaloupe, made and chased another of the enemy's privateers. This vessel proved to be *la Citoyenne*, 6, with 57 men. This schooner also held out to the last, fighting so long as she had a ray of hope. When she struck it was found that *la Citoyenne* had 4 killed and 10 wounded. In this action, the Enterprise lost a marine, and had two or three men wounded. In both of the two last actions her loss was 1 killed and 7 wounded. The manner in which these two privateers were fought was highly creditable to their commanders, neither yielding so long as there was the least chance of success. The *Citoyenne* was also sent to St. Kitts.

After cruising in the vicinity of Porto Rico for a short time, the Enterprise followed her two prizes into port. As soon as refitted, she went out, again, passing between Antigua and Desirade, where she fell in with the very three masted lugger that had given her the challenge at St. Thomas. Lt. Com. Shaw recognised the vessel at once, and closed in expectation of a warm action, but, after receiving and returning a few shot, the lugger struck. This lugger had not as large a crew as had been reported, but she had a good many passengers on board her, and among others a general officer belonging to the French army. Carrying his prize into St. Kitts, Lt. Com. Shaw, who had occasion for some hostages, to save the lives of two Americans who were in the hands of the enemy, put the general and a captain who was with him, in close confinement, in that character. This measure effected the object, the general going himself on parole to Guadaloupe, returning by the end of the month with the prisoners liberated.

The Enterprise seldom lay long at her anchors. Without waiting for the determination of the affair of the hostages, Lt. Com. Shaw took her to sea, again, as soon as ready, going off and to leeward of Guadaloupe. Here she fell in with another French privateer, the

vessels crossing each other on opposite tacks, the *Enterprise* to leeward. No sooner did the vessels exchange broadsides, than Lt. Com. Shaw put his helm down, and came round directly in the wake of his opponent. This manœuvre, which was executed in the smoke, was so rapidly effected that the *Enterprise* got nearly a complete raking broadside at her enemy, four of her six guns having discharged into the enemy's stern. As his schooner worked beautifully, Lt. Com. Shaw let her come quite round, on the other tack, when he ran his adversary aboard, on his weather quarter, passing into him and taking possession without further resistance. As the *Enterprise* closed, one of her remaining guns was fired, making eleven in all that were discharged in the combat.

The Americans knew that, on this occasion, they had met with a privateer of much celebrity on these seas. She was a brig called *P'Aigle*, and she had an armament of ten guns, with a crew of seventy-eight men, a force that rendered her nominally rather than actually inferior to themselves. This vessel had done much damage to both the American and the English commerce, and her commander had a high reputation for spirit and enterprise. The easy manner in which she was carried, therefore, at first excited some wonder among the captors, but it was soon explained by the condition of their prize. In this short, but handsome affair, *P'Aigle* had 3 killed and 9 wounded. Among the former was her first lieutenant, through whom a six-pound shot had passed. The commander and second lieutenant were both seriously wounded; circumstances that explain the reason why the crew deserted their quarters as the Americans boarded. The *Enterprise* had 3 men wounded. The prize was sent into St. Kitts, and the schooner continued to cruise.

In July, the *Enterprise* had an opportunity of still further distinguishing herself. While cruising to leeward she made a large privateer brig, just at evening, near which she remained during the night. In the morning the stranger was sweeping towards the schooner, in a calm. The Frenchman was allowed to approach, until the *Enterprise* got the sea breeze, when she set every thing and gave chase. This sudden movement gave the alarm to the brig, which made sail, and both vessels ran off, under studding-sails. The Frenchman did not actually run away, though he kept off, with a wish to ascertain the character of his foe. Believing himself faster on, than off, the wind, the privateersman gradually hauled up and boarded his starboard tacks, without waiting to haul down his studding-sails, which was not done until his vessel was close by the wind. The suddenness of this evolution, and the previous positions of the two vessels, brought the *Enterprise* right astern, when she hauled up in the wake of the enemy. In this manner the chase continued, until the American schooner, which was an exceedingly fast vessel, had so far gained on the privateer, as to come within reach of musketry, when the French opened a smart fire with small arms. The Americans returned this fire, until the vessels were quite near together, one directly in the wake of the other, when Lt. Com. Shaw kept off to draw more upon his enemy's beam. In doing so he re-

ceived the brig's broadside, when a sharp conflict was commenced, and maintained for twenty minutes, within pistol-shot, both vessels running free again. At the end of this period, the privateer had got so much the worst of it, that he attempted to escape, by hauling close by the wind, making sail and tacking. In endeavouring to come round in pursuit, the *Enterprise* missed stays. Trimming his sails anew, Lt. Com. Shaw waited until he had gathered sufficient way, when he got round on the same tack with his enemy. As soon as he could again get along side, which was not long, the action was renewed. Just at this moment, and when men were aloft endeavouring to secure the spar, a flaw struck the brig and carried away her fore-top-mast. As the privateer had put his helm up in the squall, he ran away from his wreck; while the *Enterprise*, keeping away in chase came directly upon it. Lt. Com. Shaw, who was now certain of his prize, rounded-to, lowered a boat, and saved several of the enemy who had gone over with the spar. No sooner was this done, than the schooner filled, and ranging up once more abeam of the privateer the latter struck.

On this occasion, the *Enterprise* captured a vessel materially her superior in force. Her prize was *le Flambeau*, a cruiser of still greater renown than *l'Aigle*, and with a commander of equal reputation. *Le Flambeau* mounted 12 guns, the same in number as those of her conqueror; but they were French nines, and she had 110 men on board her. In this action, the *Enterprise* had rather more men than usual, mustering a crew of 83 souls, all told, the day of the fight. *Le Flambeau* had suffered severely, having 40 killed and wounded, while the *Enterprise* had 10.

Lt. Com. Shaw carried his prize to St. Kitts, and, when condemned, her proceeds were given altogether to his own vessel, as having been captured by a cruiser of inferior force. There is no question this was one of the handsomest exploits of the war. Though it went to prove the great advantage that a public armed vessel so generally enjoys over one that is private.

In August the *Enterprise*, then cruising in the Antigua passage chased and captured another of the enemy's privateers, called *la Pauline*, of 6 guns and forty men. As *la Pauline* made no resistance, no one was hurt.

A month later, while still cruising on the same ground, this singularly fortunate schooner, after a short running fight took a letter of marque of 7 guns, and 45 men, called *la Guadaloupéenne*. On board this vessel was found the same general officer who had been taken in the lugger, and exchanged at the time of the release of the Americans, for whose safety he had been imprisoned as a hostage.

Ill health now compelled Lt. Com. Shaw to relinquish his vessel, which was given to Lt. Com. Stewart, the former officer returning home in the *Patapsco*, Capt. Geddes, accompanied by his surgeon. Although Lt. Com. Shaw was not immediately promoted, there is no question that the services just recorded were the means of his being retained in the service, on the subsequent reduction of the navy, and of his getting a high place on the list of officers of his own rank.

Such was the estimate of his conduct, that he had been told to prepare himself to assume the charge of *le Berceau* 26, which would have been a capital command. Events, however, occurred to defeat this arrangement.

Lieutenant Shaw while in command of this schooner, recaptured eleven American vessels, besides taking those just mentioned, in a cruise of only eight months. It was a proof of the greater efficiency of this description of vessel than any other, in a warfare of such a nature, that the *Enterprise*, a schooner of only 165 tons, carrying an armament of 12 light guns, and with a crew that varied from 60 to 83 men, destroyed more of the enemy's privateers, and afforded as much protection to the trade of the country, as any frigate employed in the war. It would seem to be certain, indeed, that this cruise of the *Enterprise* was one of the most brilliant and useful ever made under the American flag.

In March, the *Boston* 28, Captain Little, being near the Point of St. Marks, having a merchant brig in tow, on her way to Port-au-Prince, nine barges were discovered pulling towards the vessels, coming from the small island of Gonaives, with every appearance of hostile intentions. The barges were large, as usual, pulled by 20 oars, and contained from 30 to 40 men each. As soon as their characters were properly made out, the guns of the *Boston* were housed, and the ship was otherwise disguised. This stratagem succeeded so far as to draw the barges within gun-shot; but discovering their mistake before they got as near as could be wished, they turned and began to retreat. The *Boston* now cast off her tow, made sail in chase, ran out her guns, and opened her fire. For two hours, she was enabled to keep some of the barges within reach of her shot, and three of them, with all their crews, were sunk. The remainder did not escape without receiving more or less injury.

After this punishment of the picaroons, which were often guilty of the grossest excesses, the *Boston*, having been home to refit, was directed to cruise a short time, previously to going on the Guadeloupe station again, between the American coast and the West India islands. While in the discharge of this duty, November, 1800, in lat. $22^{\circ} 50'$ N., and long. 51° W., she made a French cruiser, which, instead of avoiding her, evidently sought an encounter. Both parties being willing, the ships were soon in close action, when, after a plain, hard-fought combat of two hours, the enemy struck. The prize proved to be the French corvette *le Berceau*, Captain Senes, mounting 24 guns, and with a crew a little exceeding 200 men. The *Berceau* was much cut up, and shortly after the action, her fore and main-masts went. Her loss in killed and wounded was never ascertained, but from the number of the latter found in her, it was probably between 30 and 40 men. Among the former were her first lieutenant, master, boatswain, and gunner. The *Boston* mounted eight more light guns than the *Berceau*, and had about an equal number of men. She had 4 killed and 11 wounded. Among the latter was her purser, Mr. Young, who died of his injuries. The *Berceau* was a singularly fine vessel of her class, and had the reputation of being

one of the fastest ships in the French marine. Like the combat between the *Constellation* and *l'Insurgente*, the superiority of force was certainly in favour of the American ship, on this occasion, but the execution was every way in proportion to the difference.

The year 1800 was actively employed on both sides in the West Indies, for while the force of the French in vessels of war seemed to decrease, as those of England and America increased, the privateers still abounded. A great many American merchantmen were captured, and the recaptures also amounted to a number that it is now difficult to ascertain, but which is known to have been large. Most of the privateers were small schooners, filled with men, sufficient to subdue a letter of marque by boarding; but, as they offered no resistance to any of the cruisers except the smallest, a brief catalogue of the prizes taken by the different large vessels, will at once give an idea of the nature of the service that was performed by the West India squadrons during this year. The *Baltimore* 20, Captain Cowper, took the *Brillante Jeunesse* 12, with a crew of 62 men, and a vessel whose name is not known; the *Merrimaek* 24, Captain Brown, the *Phenix* 14, with 128 men; the *Connecticut* 24, Captain Tryon, the *Piège* 2, with 50 men, *l'Unité* 1, with 50 men, and the *Chou Chou*; the *Boston* 28, Captain Little, the *Fortune*, *l'Heureux*, and an open boat; *Pickering* 14, Captain Hillar, the *Voltigeuse* 10, with 60 men, the *Fly*, and *l'Active* 12, with 60 men; *Boston* 28, in company with different vessels, the *Flying Fish*, the *Gourde*, the *Pelican*, and *l'Espoir*; *Herald* 18 and *Augusta* 14, the *Mutine* 6, with 60 men; *John Adams* 28, Captain Cross, the *Jason*, with 50 men, the *Decade*; the *Trumbull* 24, Captain Jewett, the *Peggie*, the *Vengeance* 10 and the *Tullie*; *Enterprise* 12, Lieutenant Commandant Sterrett, *l'Amour de la Patrie* 6, with 72 men; the *Patapsco* 18, Captain Geddes, the *Dorade* 6, with 46 men; the *Adams* 28, Captain Morris, *l'Heureuse Rencontre* 4, with 50 men, the *Gambeau*, 4 swivels and 16 men, the *Renommée*, the *Dove*, and the *Massena* 6, with 49 men. Several of the frigates also made prizes of different small privateers, barges, and boats; and many vessels were chased on shore, and either destroyed by boats or were bilged in striking. The privateers taken and brought into port, during the years 1798, 1799, and 1800, amounted in all to rather more than fifty sail. To these must be added several letters of marque. But few merchant ships were taken, the French venturing but little on the ocean, except in fast-sailing armed vessels. Still, some valuable prizes of this nature were made, and several ships of this class were driven ashore among the islands.

The constant changes that occurred among the commanders of the different vessels, render it difficult to give clear accounts of the movements of either. These changes were owing to the rapidity and irregularities of the promotions in an infant service, officers who went out at the commencement of the season lieutenants, in many instances, returning home captains, at its close. In short, the officers, like the crews, were constantly passing from vessel to vessel, several serving in two or three ships in as many years.

The *Experiment* 12, made her first cruise under the command of

Lieutenant Commandant Maley, and was much employed in conveying through the narrow passages, where the vessels were exposed to attacks from large barges manned from the shores. On the 1st of January, 1800, this schooner was becalmed in the Bight of Leogane, with several sail of American merchantmen in company and under convoy. While the little fleet lay in this helpless condition, a good deal scattered, ten of the barges mentioned, filled with negroes and mulattoes, came out against it. The barges contained from 30 to 40 men each, who were armed with muskets, cutlasses, and pikes, and in some of the boats were light guns and swivels. As the Experiment was partially disguised, the enemy came within reach of her grape before the assault was made, when Lieutenant Commandant Maley ran out his guns and opened his fire. This was the commencement of a long conflict, in which the barges were beaten off. It was not in the power of the Experiment, however, to prevent the enemy from seizing two of her convoy, which had drifted to such a distance as to be beyond protection. A third vessel was also boarded, but from her the brigands were driven by grape, though not until they had murdered her master and plundered the cabin.

The barges went twice to the shore, landed their killed and wounded, and took on board reinforcements of men. The second attack they made was directed especially at the Experiment, there being no less than three divisions of the enemy, each of which contained three heavy barges. But, after a protracted engagement, which, with the intermissions, lasted seven hours, the enemy abandoned further designs on this convoy, and retreated in disorder. The Experiment endeavoured to follow, by means of her sweeps, but finding that some of the more distant of the barges threatened two of her convoy, that had drifted out of gun-shot, she was obliged to give up the chase.

In this arduous and protracted engagement the Experiment was fought with spirit, and handled with skill. The total absence of wind gave the enemy every advantage; but notwithstanding their vast superiority in numbers, they did not dare to close. Two of the barges were sunk, and their loss in killed and wounded was known to have been heavy, while the Experiment had but two wounded, one of whom was Lieutenant David Porter.

Shortly after this affair, the command of the Experiment was given to Lieutenant Charles Stewart, late of the United States 44. Not long after he had got upon his station, this officer fell in with, and took, after a slight resistance, the French privateer *les Deux Amis*, of 8 guns, and between 40 and 50 men. The *Deux Amis* was sent in.

About a month after this occurrence, while cruising on her station, the Experiment made two sail, which had the appearance of enemy's cruisers. The Frenchmen were a brig of 18 guns, and a three-masted schooner of 14, and they gave chase to the American. Lieutenant Commandant Stewart, having soon satisfied himself of the superior sailing of his own vessel, manœuvred in a way to separate the enemy, and to keep them at a distance until after dark. At length, finding that the Frenchmen had given up the chase, and that

the brig was about a league ahead of the schooner, he cleared for action, closed with the latter, by running up on her weather quarter, and gave her a broadside. The attack was so vigorous and close, that the enemy struck in a few minutes. Throwing his first lieutenant, Mr. David Porter into the prize, Lieutenant Commandant Stewart immediately made sail after the brig; but she had gained so much ahead, during the time lost with the schooner, that she was soon abandoned, and the Experiment returned to her prize, which she carried into St. Kitts. Mr. Stewart probably owed his success to the boldness of his manœuvres, as the brig was of a force sufficient to capture him in a few minutes.

The vessel taken by the Experiment proved to be the French man-of-war schooner *la Diane*, Lieutenant Perradeau, of 14 guns, and about 60 men. She was bound to France, with General Rigaud on board; and in addition to her regular crew, 30 invalid soldiers had been put in her, having served their time in the islands. Her commander had been the first lieutenant of *l'Insurgente*, and the prize-officer of the *Retaliation*.

Returning to her station, the Experiment now had a combat that was of a less agreeable nature. A suspicious sail had been made in the course of the day, and chase was given until dark. Calculating the courses and distances, Lieutenant Commandant Stewart ordered the Experiment to be kept in the required direction until midnight, when, if he did not close with the stranger, he intended to give up the chase. At that hour, the schooner was hauled by the wind, accordingly; but, in a few minutes, a sail was seen quite near, and to windward. The Experiment went to quarters, ran up under the stranger's lee, and hailed. Finding the other vessel indisposed to give an answer, Lieutenant Commandant Stewart ordered a gun fired into him, which was returned by a broadside. A sharp action now commenced, but, it blowing heavily, and the schooner lying over, it was found impossible to depress the guns sufficiently to hull the enemy. Planks were cut and placed beneath the trucks of the gun-carriages, when the shot of the Experiment told with so much effect, that her antagonist struck. Mr. Porter, the first lieutenant of the Experiment, was now directed to take possession of the prize, but, on getting alongside, he was refused permission to board. As soon as this was known in the schooner, the boat was directed to pull out of the line of fire, with a view to recommence the action, when the stranger hailed to say he submitted.

This vessel proved to be a privateer called the *Louisa Bridger*, out of Bermuda, with an armament of 8 nine-pounders, and a crew of between 40 and 50 men. She was much cut up, and had four feet water in her hold when she surrendered. Her captain was among the wounded.

As soon as the nature of this unfortunate mistake was known, every aid was afforded the privateer, the Experiment lying by her all next day, to assist in repairing her damages. The Experiment received a good deal of injury in her rigging, and had one man killed, and a boy wounded.

Active negotiations had commenced, and in the autumn of 1800 the hopes of peace became so strong, that the efforts to increase the navy were sensibly relaxed, and the sailing of many ships, that had been intended for distant stations was suspended. In May of this year, however, the *George Washington* 24,* Captain Bainbridge, was ordered to sail with tribute to the Dey of Algiers. We now look back with wonder at the fact, that a maritime people, like those of the United States, should consent to meet the unjust demands of a power as insignificant as that of Algiers, with any other answer than a close blockade, and a vigorous war. No better school for the education of an efficient corps of officers could have been desired, than a contest with all Barbary, should the latter invite it, nor would the expense have greatly exceeded that connected with the support of the small naval force, that nearly all parties now appeared to admit was indispensable to the country. Opinion had probably as much connexion with this want of spirit, as expediency or policy, for it would be easy to show, not only in this but in all other cases, that there is no more certain means for a nation to invite aggressions, than by making undue concessions, or no surer method of obtaining justice than by insisting on its rights. The great maritime nations of Europe, with England at their head, influenced by motives peculiarly their own, had long been in the practice of bribing the Barbary States to respect the laws of nations, and it was perhaps too soon to expect that America, a country that had so recently been a colony, should step boldly out of the circle of its habits, and set the first example of self-respect and wisdom. It was reserved for that little marine, which was just struggling into existence, under all the unfavourable circumstances of a hurried organisation, defective vessels, a want of arsenals, docks, and system, to bring the nation up to the level of its own manliness and independence, at a later day, and to teach the true policy of the country to those whose duty it was to direct it.

The *George Washington* arrived in the port of Algiers in September, and feeling that he had come on a duty that, at least, entitled him to the hospitalities of the Dey, Captain Bainbridge ran in and anchored under the mole. As soon as the tribute, or presents, whichever it may suit the tone of the diplomacy to term them, were put into the hands of the consul, a request was made to Captain Bainbridge to place his ship at the disposal of the Dey, with a sole view to the convenience and policy of that prince. It appears that the Sultan had taken offence with the regency of Algiers, on account of a treaty it had lately concluded with France, a power with which the Ottoman

* In giving the rates of vessels, except in flagrant instances, such as those in which the *Chesapeake* and *Philadelphia* are called forty-fours, and the *Adams*, *John Adams*, and *Boston* thirty-twos, we follow the irregular rule which appears to have been laid down in the service at the time. The *George Washington* was much nearer a thirty-two in size, than most of the twenty-eights of the navy, though in the official reports she is called a twenty-four. The tonnage of this ship was 624 tons, while that of the *Boston* was only 530. She had been an Indiaman, and when sold out of service, in 1803, returned to her old employment. The proper rate of this ship would have made her nearer a twenty-eight, than any thing else. Her last service was to carry tribute to the Mediterranean, under Lieutenant Commandant Shaw.

Porte was then at war, and his anger was to be deprecated by a timely application of presents. The good offices of Captain Bainbridge were now solicited in conveying these offerings, with a suitable agent, to Constantinople. As soon as apprised of his wish, Captain Bainbridge sought an audience with the Dey, and having obtained one, he expressed his regret at not being able to comply with his request, as it would be disregarding the orders of his superiors at home. The Dey now gave his guest to understand that both he and his ship were in his power, and his request was put more in the shape of a demand. A long and spirited altercation ensued, until, influenced by the representations of the consul, Mr. O'Brien, the certainty that his ship would be otherwise seized and sent by force, the apprehension of a war, and the knowledge that near two hundred sail of merchantmen were exposed in those seas, Captain Bainbridge entered into stipulations on the subject. He consented to carry the agent and presents of Algiers, on condition that peace should be maintained, that the Dey should deem the act one of friendly concession on the part of the United States, and not one of right, and that, on his return from Constantinople, no further demands should be preferred.

When the ship was about to sail from Algiers a new difficulty arose on the subject of the flag; the Dey insisting that his own should be hoisted at the main, while that of the United States should be shown forward. In maintaining this claim, he affirmed that it was a compliment always paid him by the English, French, and Spanish captains, who had been employed on similar service in his behalf. After a strong remonstrance, Captain Bainbridge yielded in appearance, but as he refused to make any pledges on the subject, as soon as he was beyond the reach of the guns of the works, he set his own ensign as usual. Under these circumstances the *George Washington* sailed.

At this distance of time from the event, a dispassionate opinion may perhaps be formed concerning the propriety of the course pursued by the officer in command of the *George Washington*. On the one hand was the war with France, which might have rendered the management of a war with Algiers more difficult than common, and the probability that the latter would ensue in the event of a refusal. But, if France was at war with America, she was also at war with England, and the appearance of the *George Washington* in the Mediterranean was a proof that cruisers might be employed in that sea, although the nation was without ports, or arsenals. As opposed to the general hazards of war, and the particular risks incurred by the crew of the *George Washington*, were those common and enduring principles of honour and right, by maintaining which, nations, in the end, assert their claims in the promptest, cheapest, and most efficient manner. It is the peculiar province of the officers and men of a vessel of war to incur risks equally of life and liberty, as on all other occasions, no man manifested more of the true spirit, in this respect, than Captain Bainbridge, the consideration of his own peculiar danger, or that of his crew, probably had no influence on his decision.

The true question is, whether an officer in his situation ought to have taken the responsibility of producing a war by a refusal to comply with the demand of the Dey, or whether his duty pointed out the course pursued by Captain Bainbridge. No one can hesitate about saying that the first should be the decision of a commander of a vessel of war, in our own time. But Captain Bainbridge was not before Algiers in an age when America was as ready as she is to-day to assert all those great principles of right which nations must maintain with their blood and treasure, if they are to be maintained at all. He had himself just been employed in transporting tribute to Algiers, under a solemn law of his country, and it would have been a violent presumption indeed, to suppose that a government, which had so far neglected the just feelings of national pride, and the first and simplest principles of policy, as to expend in tribute the money that would nearly, if not quite, extort justice by force, would look with favour on an act that should produce a war, on a naked point of honour. We dislike the decision of Captain Bainbridge, while we distinctly see, that in requiring him to have acted otherwise, we require him to have been in advance of the opinion of his day, and of the policy of his government.*

It is understood that Captain Bainbridge was much influenced by the advice and opinions of Mr. O'Brien, the consul. This gentleman had been one of the first prisoners taken by Algiers in 1785, and he had passed many weary years in captivity, almost abandoned by hope, and apparently, though not really, forgotten by his country. He had probably little faith in the existence of that patriotism which is ready to sacrifice immediate interest to future good, and saw in perspective a piratical warfare, and captivities like his own, which, unrelieved by any feelings of humanity, would be nearly allied to despair. This gentleman is not to be censured; for bitter experience had taught him how little is the care taken of individual rights, by popular governments, when the evil does not present itself to the senses of bodies of men, and how strong is the desire to shrink from responsibility in those who are subject to their judgment and clamour. This is the weak side of the polity, and were it not redeemed by so much that is superior to the effects of all other systems, it is one that would totally unfit a nation to maintain the respect of mankind. Mr. O'Brien, too, had been educated as a ship-master, and probably reasoned more like the agent of a commercial house, than the agent of a government that wanted none of the elements of greatness but the will. That neither he nor Captain Bainbridge, frank seamen, discovered much of the finesse of diplomacy, is evident; for a practised negotiator, detecting the necessity of submission, would have anticipated the final demand, and averted the more disagreea-

* It has been conjectured that Captain Bainbridge consented to go to Constantinople, with a view to show the American flag to the Ottoman Porte, and to open the way for a treaty, and a trade in the Black Sea; but we know of no evidence of the truth of this supposition. It ought to be added, moreover, that the ships of the greatest powers of Europe, often performed offices like that required of Captain Bainbridge, for the Dey, and that the former was perfectly aware of the fact.

ble features of compulsion, by apparently conceding that to solicitation, which was finally yielded to menace.

When the Americans, feeble, scattered colonists, without military stores, posts, fortified towns or navy, determined to resist the usurpations of the British Parliament, they were influenced by those lofty principles of right, which are certain to lead to greatness. It is not pretended that the taxation of England bore heavily on America in practice, but the resistance grew out of the maintenance of a principle; and the result of sacrificing immediate interests to the true and elevating policy of the right, is before the world. Even many of the well-disposed, who belonged to the school of those who are for consulting temporary good, and whose political wisdom too often savours of the expedient, thought the contest premature; but, happily, a better temper prevailed in the country, and the nation escaped the risks of losing its spirit under the gradual operation of usage, as might have attended delay. Immediate good was sacrificed to the great objects of a more liberal policy, and we now find that England, so far from persevering in a wish to tax colonies over which she does not possess the right, even hesitates about taxing those, which, in the way of principle, lie at her mercy by conquest.

It was the 9th of October, 1800, when the *George Washington* left Algiers. She entered the Bosphorus with a fresh breeze at the southward, and on approaching the Dardanelles, where are two castles that command the passage, and where ships are obliged to exhibit passports in order to proceed, Captain Bainbridge felt some embarrassment as to the course he ought to take. He had no firman, his country was scarcely known at the Ottoman Porte, and he might be delayed weeks, negotiating for permission to go up to the town. From this dilemma he relieved himself by the happy and prompt expedient of a seaman. The castles stand nearly opposite each other, on the European and Asiatic shores, and guns carrying stone balls, that weigh, in some instances, eight hundred pounds, are pointed in a manner to command the channel. These guns, however, are stationary like mortars, and become nearly useless the moment a ship is out of their regulated range. The rest of the defences, at that time, were very immaterial. The width of the Bosphorus, here, a little exceeds three thousand feet. As his ship approached the castle, Captain Bainbridge hauled up his courses, clewed up his top-gallant sails, and made the usual preparations for anchoring. When nearly up with them, she commenced firing a salute, which was instantly returned from the shore, and, at this moment, when the vessel was partly concealed in smoke, sail was made, and before the Turks recovered from their surprise, being totally unprepared for a thing so unusual, she was beyond their reach.

Captain Bainbridge now pursued his way to Constantinople, where he arrived as much unexpected as he was unannounced and unknown. The *George Washington* anchored the 9th of November, in the outer harbour, where she was soon visited by an officer, to demand under what flag she sailed. The usual reply was given, and the officer took his leave. An hour or two afterwards he return-

ed, to say that his government had never heard of such a nation as the United States of America, and to request some more explicit answer. The officer was now sent back with the information that the *George Washington* belonged to the "New World," which was received as satisfactory, the Turkish government extending to the strangers much of that polished hospitality for which it is justly esteemed.

The *George Washington* remained at Constantinople until the 30th of December, when she again sailed for Algiers, which port she reached on the 21st of January, 1801. Though much solicited to do so, Captain Bainbridge now refused to carry his ship within the mole, but kept her out of the reach of the batteries. The Dey made a new request that he would return to Constantinople with his agent, and though the old threats were not exactly resorted to, the ship being beyond his reach, war was still held in perspective as the alternative. Captain Bainbridge, however, peremptorily refused to put himself and ship again at the mercy of the Dey.

Having borrowed some ballast, Captain Bainbridge was about to have it landed in lighters, when the Dey, affecting to be indignant at his want of confidence, forbade the lightermen to undertake the job, announcing at the same time, unless the ballast was returned, that he would declare war. The consul again so earnestly entreated Captain Bainbridge to comply, that the latter, on receiving a solemn stipulation that no more should be said on the subject of a new voyage to Constantinople, took the *George Washington* into the mole, and landed the ballast, which consisted of a number of old guns.

Captain Bainbridge soon after had an audience with the Dey, when the latter got into such a rage as to threaten personal violence. Fortunately, the Capudan Pacha had become pleased with the manly conduct and fine personal appearance of the American officer, while the latter was at Constantinople, and, at parting, he had given him a firman of protection. This paper was now presented, and it immediately changed the savage ferocity of a barbarian into expressions of friendship and offers of service. From that moment the tone of the Dey was altered; and the man, whom a minute before he had threatened with irons, was converted into a person of influence and authority. Such was the effect of Asiatic despotism and a ruthless discipline.

A good opportunity now offered to relieve some of the mortification which Captain Bainbridge had experienced, by affording him an occasion to be the instrument of rescuing many Christians from slavery. One of the causes of quarrel between the Regency and the Porte, as has been stated, was the separate peace made by the former with France. To expiate for that crime, the Dey had been compelled to cut down the flag-staff of the French consul, to declare war against his country, and to condemn him and fifty or sixty of his countrymen to slavery. Notwithstanding the war which still existed between America and France, Captain Bainbridge interfered in behalf of these unfortunate people, and, profiting by the unexpected influence of his firman, he obtained a stipulation from the Dey, that

all who could get out of his dominions within eight-and-forty hours, might go away, while those who could not, should be slaves. No other vessel offering, the *George Washington* was employed in this grateful office, and by great exertions she went to sea within the stipulated time, carrying with her all the French in Algiers. The passengers were landed at Alicant, and the ship returned home, where the conduct of her commander, throughout these novel and trying circumstances, met with the fullest approbation of the government, and he was immediately transferred to a much finer ship, the *Essex* 32.

While these events were taking place in the Mediterranean, the negotiations for peace with France had been going on at Paris, and a treaty to that effect was ratified by the Senate on the 3d of February, 1801. All the necessary forms having been complied with on both sides, the *Herald* 18, Captain Russel, was sent to the West Indies, with orders of recall for the whole force.

Thus ended the short and irregular struggle with France, in which the present marine of the United States was founded, most of the senior officers now in service having commenced their careers as midshipmen during its existence.

CHAPTER XVII.

Reduction of the navy—The navy as reduced—Vessels sold—Of the war with France, as it affected the navy—Gallant defence of the *Louisa*.

EVERY form of government has evils peculiar to itself. In a democracy there exists a standing necessity for reducing every thing to the average comprehension, the high intelligence of a nation usually conceding as much to its ignorance, as it imparts. One of the worst consequences in a practical sense, of this compromise of knowledge, is to be found in the want of establishments that require foresight and liberality to be well managed, for the history of every democracy has shown that it has been deficient in the wisdom which is dependent on those expenditures that foster true economy, by anticipating evils and avoiding the waste of precipitation, want of system, and a want of knowledge. The new government of the Union was now to experience evils of this nature, that are perhaps inseparable from popular power, and to contend with the cry of extravagance, as extravagance is usually viewed by those who have not sufficient information to understand that, as in ordinary transactions, the highest pay commands the best services, so in public things, the expenditures made in a time of peace are the surest means of obtaining economy in a time of war.

The commencement of the year 1801, was distinguished by a change of administration, for the first time since the adoption of the constitution; Mr. Jefferson and his political friends, who were usually known by the name of the republican party, expelling the federalists

from power, with Mr. Adams at their head, by a large majority of the electoral votes. One of the charges brought against the federalist was an undue love for unnecessarily large and expensive establishments, in imitation of the English school of politicians, while the republicans were accused of a wish to deceive the ignorant, by pretending to a nakedness of legislation and an absence of precautionary measures, which, while they would save money at the moment, might involve the country in eventual ruin, and which would unfit the people for the great exertions certain to be required in the hour of danger.

In this controversy, as is commonly the case, both parties maintained principles that were false, and insisted on measures, which, if not utterly impracticable, were at least impolitic. The federalists held the doctrine that the people ought to be taxed, if it were merely to accustom them to pay for the support of government; and the democrats, or republicans applied to the management of political interests the notion that all that was necessary was to provide for the demands of the day, virtually leaving the future to attend to its own wants. The first theory was like that which would prescribe periodical depletion to the young soldier, in order that he might be ready to shed his blood in the hour of trial; while the other may be likened to the folly of the agriculturist who should expect a crop, without taking the precaution to sow the seed.

In addition to the extremes into which political struggles are apt to push political controversialists, Mr. Jefferson is known to have been averse to most of the measures taken by his predecessor against France, and he probably entered into the exercise of his duties, with a strong disposition to erase as many of the evidences of their existence as possible, from the statutes of the nation. A president of the United States, however, is little more than an executive officer while confined to the circle of his constitutional powers, and the Congress that terminated on the 4th of March, 1801, the day he came into office, had passed a law, in some measure regulating a peace establishment for the navy. This law gave great discretionary authority to the president, it is true, for it empowered him, whenever he should deem it expedient, to sell any, or all of the vessels of the navy, with the exception of thirteen of the frigates, which were named in the act, as in his opinion the good of the country might require. To this part of the law no great objections could be taken, even by the friends of an enlarged and liberal policy, as most of the vessels not excepted had been bought into, and were unsuited to the service, more especially at a period, when new improvements in naval architecture, that had been borrowed from the French, were fast superseding the old mode of construction.

The law also directed the guns and stores of the vessels sold to be preserved, a provision that proved singularly unprofitable in the end, as the carronade now began to supersede the small long gun, in naval warfare, and two of the sloops would probably have supplied all the nines and sixes that have been used in the navy for the last five-and-thirty years. But the most capital error of this law was in the

limitation it set to the list of the different ranks of officers. The whole of the sea-officers, sailing-masters excepted, were confined to nine captains, thirty-six lieutenants, and one hundred and fifty midshipmen; the rank of master commandant being abolished, should the president see fit to discharge those then in commission. The phraseology, as well as the provisions of this law, betrayed that ignorance of the details of the service, which has been so common in the legislation of the country, omitting many directions that were indispensable in practice, and laying stress on others that were of little or no moment.

Notwithstanding all the accusations brought against it, at the time, the administration of 1801 exercised its authority under the statute, which, it will be well remembered, was enacted previously to its accession to office, with a reasonable discretion, and though it may have made a few of those mistakes that are incidental to the discharge of all such trusts, it conformed to the spirit of the law, with a due regard to liberality. Mr. Jefferson soon discovered, as it falls to the lot of all strong oppositionists to discover, when they attain their wishes, that he must follow in the footsteps of his predecessor in managing most of the ordinary interests of the nation, though the party that went out of power did not appear to recognise the wholesome but unanswerable truth, that, in the nature of things, all administrations must be right in their mode of treating a vast majority of the concerns entrusted to their care. The selection of the officers to be retained was one of great delicacy and importance, as the future character of the navy depended more on the proper discharge of this duty than on that of any other. The great defect of the law, indeed, was the narrow limits to which the list of the superior sea-officers was confined, it being at all times easier to build ships than to form professional men fit to command them. This part of his delegated duties the president discharged in perfect good faith, apparently altogether disregarding party considerations. We give in notes* the names of the superior officers who were in service, at the close of the war with France, as a subject of historical interest with the country, and we add the names of all the quarter-deck officers who were retained, to which gentlemen the nation must look for those who perfected the school which has since reflected so much credit on the American name.

Although some meritorious officers were necessarily dismissed, on this occasion, there is no question that the navy was greatly benefited by the reduction; the hurried manner in which the appointments were originally made, having been the means of introducing many persons into the service who were unfitted for its duties. There was also some irregularity in the mode of reduction, the name of Captain M'Niell not appearing on the list of the retained captains, though it is certain that he commanded the *Boston* as late as 1802. This discrepancy can only be accounted for by supposing that a discretion was used in retaining a few more officers than the legal number, with a view to ascertain if all those who were first selected might choose

* See Note C, Appendix.

to serve. In the case of Captain M'Niell, he was on foreign service at the time the reduction was made.

The law of Congress directed that thirteen vessels, named in the act, should not be disposed of, leaving it discretionary with the president to sell the remainder or not. The following were the ships retained, viz:

Constitution	44,	New York	36,
United States	44,	Essex	32,
President	44,	General Greene	28,
Congress	38,	Boston	28,
Constellation	38,	Adams	28,
Chesapeake	38,	John Adams	28.
Philadelphia	38,		

We have set down the rates of these ships at what they ought to have been, in order to give a more accurate comparative idea of the true force of the different vessels, taking the English system as a guide. The only vessel that the president desired to retain, in addition to the ships named in the law, was the *Enterprise* 12, and by adding this schooner to the list just given, the reader will obtain an accurate idea of the navy, as reduced in 1801.

The remainder of the ships were sold. We give a list of their names and rates, marking those which were expressly built for the public service with an asterisk, to distinguish them from those that were not, viz:

George Washington	24,	Herald	18,
Ganges	24,	*Trumbull	18,
*Portsmouth	24,	*Warren	18,
*Merrimack	24,	*Norfolk	18,
*Connecticut	24,	*Richmond	18,
Baltimore	20,	*Pinckney	18,
Delaware	20,	*Eagle	14,
Montezuma	20,	*Augusta	14,
*Maryland	18,	*Scammel	14,
*Patapsco	18,	*Experiment	12,

And nine galleys.

While it is certain that a navy with only one small cruiser, must be very insufficient for a service like that of the United States, the government ought not to be censured for its selection though it was loudly condemned at the time. In nothing had the art of naval architecture made greater progress, within the few preceding years, than in the mode of constructing vessels of war below the class of frigates. The carronade was now fast superseding the light long gun every where, and it became the aim of those who were charged with the duty of preparing armaments, to put guns that would throw as heavy a shot as possible, into the sloops of war. The ships that rated eighteen, instead of carrying sixes, or nines, or even twelves, began to carry thirty-two pound carronades, and they required greater strength, thicker bulwarks, and larger ports than it had been the custom formly to give to vessels of their class. Many of the ships sold, had been constructed in a hurry, and of inferior timber, and it

is as unprofitable to continue expending money in repairs on a vessel with a defective frame, as it is to waste it on a house that is known to be without a sufficient foundation.

The reduction of the navy, moreover, was greatly exaggerated at the time, so far as the vessels alone were concerned. At the peace with France, the cruising vessels in service were thirty-four in number, and of these, fourteen of the best were retained. No frigate, unless the *George Washington* could be considered one, was sold, and this ship had been purchased into the service, and not built for the public. As regards force, materially more than half, perhaps four-fifths, was preserved, the eight largest frigates retained being more than strong enough to contend with all the vessels sold. This was not the opinion of the day, however, for interested political clamour was directed by ignorance, and most men counted one gun as another, without reference to its weight, or its disposition in the vessel. The most impolitic of the measures of the government, and it was one of which it soon had reason to repent, was the law suspending the construction of the six ships, to carry not less than seventy-four guns each, authorised by the act of 1798.*

The recklessness of political opposition soon made itself apparent, in its usual inconsiderate and acrimonious forms; a recommendation that emanated from the government, for the establishment of dry-docks, one of the first and most important measures in the formation of a serviceable marine, meeting with all the ridicule that ignorance and hostility could invent, even from those who professed to be the strongest friends of the navy. Profiting by the most vulgar association that a want of knowledge could connect with the word "dry," the papers of the day kept ringing the changes on this tune, virtually accusing the administration of wishing to have a navy on shore! It is, however, just to add, that the views of the president extended a little beyond the common practice, his recommendation going so far as to advise docks for the preservation, as well as for the repairs, of ships. Thus did the gallant little service, which already merited so much from the nation, and which is so inseparably connected with all the great considerations of national character, national rights, and even of national existence, find itself compelled to struggle through its infancy, equally assailed by its nominal friends, who were in juring its vitals while loudest in their professions of amity, and dis-trusted by those who, having made the cry of economy a stalking horse in their way to power, shrunk from the heavy charges that this, like all other complete means of national defence, must unavoidably entail on the public. Still it preserved its spirit, and finding itself relieved from the association of those who were never worthy to wear its livery, and believing, with truth, that in passing a peace without dissolution, it saw a flattering perspective of service before it, the gallant corps that remained, prepared itself to enter on its new duties

* The materials collected for these vessels, principally live-oak timber, were to have been preserved; but much of the latter was subsequently used in the construction of smaller ships, and frequently to great waste.

with the confidence and zeal of men who felt that they had fairly embarked in an honourable profession for life.

This period may be deemed that which produced the crisis in the fate of the American navy. At the peace of 1783, the service had been entirely disbanded, and even the preparations commenced in 1794, had been suspended when peace was made with Algiers, leaving little besides the name of a marine behind them. The relations of the country with Tripoli, one of the Barbary powers, doubtless, had its influence on the fortunes of the service at this particular moment, the government feeling the necessity of being in readiness to resist the aggressions of another of those semi-pirates who then infested the Mediterranean.

In the mean time, the proper officers proceeded to carry out the conditions of the recent treaty entered into with France, agreeably to the conditions of which, all the vessels of war captured on either side were to be restored. The *Insurgente* having been lost, this stipulation became impracticable as regarded her; but *le Berceau*, and *la Vengeance*, the small cruiser taken by the *Trumbull*, were returned to the French. In the whole, eighty prizes had been brought into the American ports, and of these, three were the vessels of war already mentioned. Most of the remainder were privateers. Of the latter, eight were acquitted as illegal captures, one, *le Croyable*, was retaken, and the remaining sixty-eight were condemned and sold.

The loss of American shipping in this war was considerable; but fewer vessels were taken, in proportion, after hostilities had commenced on the side of this country, than had been previously seized. No vessel of war but the *Retaliation*, fell into the hands of the French, under any circumstances.

On the whole, the country was satisfied with the results of the exertions it had made during this irregular and informal contest, and a strong feeling was awakened in favour of a permanent navy. Whatever may have been the private opinions of the new president on this important branch of national policy,—and it is believed they were neither as liberal, nor as far-sighted, as comported with his views in general, though they were far from meriting all the reproaches they received,—he put at the head of the department, Mr. Robert Smith, of Maryland, a gentleman who rendered himself justly popular with the service, who continued for the long space of nine years to serve its interests with zeal and intelligence, and who has left behind him, in the breasts of all who then composed the navy, a feeling that while their interests were in his care, they were intrusted to one well disposed to serve the country and themselves.

In the war with France very few privateers went to sea, that country having little trade to suffer by such enterprises, though scarcely a merchantman sailed without an armament, and a crew at least double that she would have carried in a time of peace. The years 1798, 1799, and 1800, were virtually years of a general maritime war, and the English navy, that great drain of seamen for the entire civilized world, was as actively employed as at any previous or subsequent period of its teeming history. Notwithstanding these

circumstances, the American government, while it suffered many inconveniencies from the shortness of the enlistments, found no difficulty in obtaining men during this struggle, although a number but little short of ten thousand must have been constantly employed during the year 1800. At that time, the tonnage of the country was about half what it is to-day, as was also the total number of seamen. The enemy was very active, a fact that is proved by the circumstance that more French privateers were taken and destroyed by the vessels of the American navy alone, in the West Indies, than the country sent cruisers to sea, at any period of the war. Including the revenue vessels employed in 1798 and 1799, America had at sea forty-two different cruisers during the three years of this contest; and their captures, limiting them to the vessels that were actually taken into port, amounted within two to double this number; and of these, considerably more than half were privateers of the enemy. Still we find the trade but little interrupted, after the armaments were made. In 1797, when America had not a vessel of war in commission, the exports of the country amounted to a little more than \$57,000,000; in 1798, when the coast was cleared of the French privateers, and the war was carried first into the West Indies, these exports reached to \$61,327,411; in 1799, to \$78,665,528; and in 1800, to \$70,971,780. Some fluctuations in trade probably produced the diminution of the latter year, as the American coast was then nearly unapproached by the French. This truth, indeed, quite clearly appears by the revenue on imports, which, in the same three years, was as follows: 1798, \$7,106,061; 1799, \$6,610,449; 1800, \$9,080,932.

This war, like every maritime contest in which America has been engaged with any civilised nation, was also distinguished by many obstinate actions between letters of marque and cruisers of the enemy. The papers of the day are full of accounts of this nature, and, although they are not altogether free from the suspicion of exaggerations, or from the boastful representations of most similar *ex parte* statements, it is known that some are essentially true. Among other combats of this nature, was one which deserves to be mentioned, not only on account of the general gallantry of the defence, but of the presence of mind displayed at a most critical moment by a young man of Philadelphia, under age, who, we regret to add, was lost at sea, in the succeeding voyage, and, because the facts are derived from a source that puts them beyond dispute.

In the course of the year 1800, a lightly armed letter of marque brig, belonging to Philadelphia, called the *Louisa*, was standing into Gibraltar, when several privateers came out of Algesiras, as was the practice of the French in that day, to cut her off from her port. A long and desultory action ensued, in the course of which one latine-rigged vessel, full of men, pressed the *Louisa* hard, and made several bold efforts to board, in all of which, however, she was frustrated. The crew of the *Louisa* consisted of only a few men, and when their captain fell, with a shot through his shoulder, and the mate went below for a moment to lay him in the cabin, believing that the battle was over, they deserted their guns in a body, going down into the

forecastle, with the exception of the man at the wheel. At that moment the enemy was at a little distance, keeping up his fire, and it was thought, making preparations for a fresh attempt to board. With a view to meet this effort, the quarter-deck guns of the brig had been properly loaded and trained, but when the mate, after an absence of only three or four minutes, re-appeared on deck, one passenger excepted, there was not a soul to sustain him, while the enemy was luffing up under his lee quarter, with his fore-castle crowded, and a long bowsprit lined with boarders, ready to take the leap. He knew if the latter gained the brig's deck, resistance would be out of the question, even if all on board were at their stations. This was a critical instant for so young a man; but he was a seaman of Philadelphia, the port that then furnished the readiest, the best, and many of the bravest mariners that sailed out of America. He ran to the fore-scuttle and summoned the people up, "to get a last shot at the Frenchmen, before they should get out of their reach!" Such an appeal admitted of no delay. The men rushed on deck with cheers, were instantly ordered to their guns, and were in time to meet the enemy. A raking fire was poured in, the bowsprit was swept of its boarders, the privateer tacked and hauled off, and the brig was permitted to proceed without further molestation. The *Louisa* entered the roads of Gibraltar in triumph, the engagement having been witnessed by thousands on the rock.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Assumptions of the Bashaw of Tripoli—The American flag-staff is cut down—A squadron is fitted out under Com. Dale—His instructions—Action with, and capture of the ship *Tripoli*, by Lieut. Comdt. Sterrett—Com. Dale overhauls a Greek vessel—takes out an officer and twenty Tripolitan soldiers—attempts an exchange of prisoners—The President is near being lost—Leaving the Philadelphia and the *Essex*, Com. Dale proceeds home.

WE have now reached the period when the American marine assumed a fixed and permanent character. No more reductions were anticipated by those who understood the necessities of the country, nor have any ever been seriously attempted. Some little time necessarily elapsed before it could be ascertained which of the officers selected might choose to remain in service, and resignations were frequent for many succeeding years, in consequence of the narrow limits to which the policy of the day had reduced this important branch of the public service, but, from that time to this, no officer has ever been compelled to abandon the profession, in consequence of the wish to retrench, or of a disposition to reduce the establishment. The security which this state of things tended to create has been gradually increasing, until it would be scarcely too much to say, that both the country and the navy, have got to consider the relation

which exists between them as permanent and indissoluble. This confidence on the one hand, and fostering policy on the other, have not been the work of a day, however, but are the consequences of a long train of historical events, that it has become our duty to record.

It has already been said that the necessities, rather than the foresight of the new government prevented it from at once incurring the expense of a marine, and it is probable that, in causing such ships to be built as those which were laid down under the law of 1794, it looked forward to their forming the commencement of a navy suited to the wants and dignity of a country, that all but those who were blinded by passion and malignancy, could easily see was destined early to become powerful. Something, notwithstanding, must be attributed to the peculiar condition of the relations between one or two of the Barbary States and the young republic, at the precise moment when peace was made with France, and in pursuing the regular chain of events connected with our subject, we are next to turn our eyes towards the Mediterranean and to the coast of Africa, as their scene.

As early as in 1800, the Bashaw of Tripoli, Jussuf Caramalli, who had deposed his brother Hamet, and now sat on the throne of this dependency of the Porte, manifested a disposition to war. He had learned the concessions made to Algiers, the manner in which the Dey of that regency had been bribed to do justice, and, by a course of reasoning that was certainly plausible, if not true, he inferred that the government which had been induced to pay tribute to one pirate, might be induced to pay tribute to another. The complaints on which this semblance of royalty grounded his justification for war, are such as ought to be generally known. He accused the American government of having bribed the subordinates of Tunis at a higher price than it had bribed him; he added, that Algiers had received a frigate, while he had received none; and even in a letter to the president he said significantly, in reply to some of the usual diplomatic professions of friendship, "we could wish that these your expressions were followed by deeds, and not by empty words. You will therefore endeavour to satisfy us by a good manner of proceeding"—"But if only flattering words are meant, without performance, every one will act as he finds convenient. We beg a speedy answer, without neglect of time, as a delay on your part cannot but be prejudicial to your interests."

Shortly after, the Bashaw informed the American consul at Tripoli, that he would wait six months for a present in money, and if it did not arrive within that time, he would formally declare war against the United States. Jussuf Caramalli was as good as his word. No tidings of the money having reached Tripoli, the flag-staff of the American consulate was cut down on the 14th day of May, 1801, and war was proclaimed in the act.

While Tripoli went so directly to work, difficulties existed with the other states of Barbary. Algiers complained that the tribute was in arrears, and Tunis found fault with the quality of various articles that had been sent to her, by way of bribing her not to seize Ameri-

can vessels. Certain planks and oars were too short, and guns of a particular description were much wanted. Morocco was also distrusted, although the prince of that country had not yet deigned to intimate his wishes.

Timid as was the policy of the United States, and disgraceful as was that of all christendom, at that period, in reference to the Barbary powers, the former was too much flushed with its recent successes against France, and too proud of its infant marine, to submit to all these exactions without resistance. Before it was known that Tripoli had actually declared war, a squadron was ordered to be fitted for the Mediterranean, with a view to awe the different sovereigns of Barbary, by its presence. The vessels selected for this purpose consisted of the *President* 44, Captain J. Barron, *Philadelphia* 38, Captain S. Barron, *Essex* 32, Captain Bainbridge, and *Enterprise* 12, Lieutenant Commandant Sterrett. At the head of this force was Captain Dale, an officer whose career we have had frequent occasion to notice, in the course of past events, and who now hoisted his broad pennant in the *President* 44.

The instructions given to Commodore Dale, directed him to proceed to Gibraltar, where he could ascertain the state of things among the distrusted regencies, when he was to be governed by circumstances. Had either power declared war, he was to act against it, under certain restrictions; otherwise he was to go off Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, in succession, to deliver presents and promises at each place, and in the event of his succeeding in maintaining the peace, he was to make the circuit of the Mediterranean, in the course of the summer, re-appear off the ports of Tripoli, Tunis, and Algiers, and the peace still continuing, he was ordered to sail for home in October. Should either of the regencies have commenced hostilities, however, he had discretionary authority as to the disposition of the ships, but was ordered to leave the Mediterranean on the 1st of December, at the latest, it having been deemed unsafe to cruise in that sea in the winter.

Soon after these orders were received, the ships rendezvoused in Hampton Roads, and sailed for their place of destination. On the 1st of July they anchored at Gibraltar, where they found the Tripolitan admiral, a renegado of the name of Lisle, in a ship of 26 guns, with a brig of 16, in company. There is no question that the timely appearance of the American squadron prevented these two vessels from getting into the Atlantic, where they might have struck a severe blow at the commerce of the country. The admiral, however, protested there was no war, though the information derived from other sources, induced Commodore Dale to distrust his sincerity. The *Essex* was sent along the north shore to collect the American trade, and to give it convoy, the *Philadelphia* was ordered to cruise in the straits to watch the two Tripolitans, while the *President* and *Enterprise* shaped their course towards Algiers, as ordered. The latter, however, soon parted company from the *President* on duty.

The appearance of a ship of the *President's* force at Algiers and Tunis, had an extremely quieting effect on the resentments of their

two princes; and Mr. O'Brien, the consul at the former regency, gave it as his opinion, that the arrival of the squadron in the Mediterranean, had more weight in preserving the peace, than if the *George Washington*, which vessel was soon expected, had come in with the tribute.

On the 1st of August, while running for Malta, the *Enterprise* 12, Lieutenant Commandant Sterrett, fell in with and spoke a polacre-rigged ship of 14 guns and 80 men, belonging to Tripoli, that was known to be out on a cruise against the American commerce. Running close alongside, an action was commenced within pistol-shot, and it continued with little intermission for three hours, when the Turk submitted. During the combat, however, the Tripolitan struck three several times, twice re-hoisting his colours, and opening his fire again, when he thought an advantage might be obtained by attacking the Americans unprepared. Irritated by this treachery, on the last occasion the *Enterprise* resumed her fire, with an intention to sink her opponent, but after some further though fruitless resistance, the Turkish captain appeared in the waist of his ship, and threw his ensign into the sea, bending his body and supplicating for quarter by signs, when the fire of the schooner was stopped.

The name of the captured ship was the Tripoli, and that of her rais, or commander, Mahomet Sous. Although the Turks showed courage, or desperation would be a better term, this first trial of skill with their trans-atlantic enemies was far from creditable to them. The *Enterprise* raked her enemy repeatedly, and the consequences were dreadfully apparent in the result, 50 of the corsair's people having been killed and wounded in the battle. The ship herself was a wreck, and her mizen-mast was shot away. On the other hand, the *Enterprise* sustained but little injury even aloft, and had not a man hurt. Neither did she suffer materially in her hull.

The instructions of Lieutenant Sterrett did not permit him to carry the Tripoli in, and Lieutenant David Porter took possession, and proceeded to dismantle her. Her armament was thrown overboard, and she was stripped of every thing but one old sail, and a single spar, that were left to enable her to reach port. After attending to the wounded, the prize was abandoned, and it is understood a long time elapsed before she got in. When her unfortunate rais appeared in Tripoli, even his wounds did not avail him. He was placed on a jackass, paraded through the streets, and received the bastinado. The effect of this punishment appears to have been different from what was expected, for it is said the panic among the sailors became so great, in consequence, that it was found difficult to obtain men for the corsairs that were then fitting for sea. One thing is certain, that, though this war lasted three years, and in the end became both spirited and active, very few Tripolitan cruisers ventured from port during its continuance; or if they quitted port, they were cautious to an extreme about venturing from the land.

By a message of Mr. Jefferson's, sent to Congress on the 8th of December, 1801, we learn the reason why the powers given in the instructions to Commodore Dale, did not extend to captures. In

alluding to the action between the *Enterprise* and the *Tripoli*, after relating the facts, the president adds—"Unauthorised by the constitution without the sanction of Congress, to go beyond the line of defence, the vessel, being disabled from committing further hostilities, was liberated, with its crew. The legislature will doubtless consider, whether, by authorising measures of offence also, it will place our force on an equal footing with that of its adversaries."

It must be admitted that this was carrying the doctrine of literal construction to extremes. While, in the nature of things, it may require the consent of two independent sovereignties to change the legal relations of the people of different countries, from those of a state of warfare to those of a state of peace, it is opposed to reason and practice to say it is not competent for either of these sovereignties, singly, to change these relations, from those of a state of peace to those of a state of war. The power to commence hostilities, as it belongs to states, depends on international law, and in no degree on the subordinate regulations of particular forms of government. It is both an affirmative and a negative right: the first, as it is used by the party that declares the war; and the latter, as it vests the nation assailed with all the authority and privileges of a belligerent. It surely cannot be contended that the American citizen who should aid a hostile force sent against his country, would not be guilty of treason, because Congress had not yet declared war, though the enemy had; and it is equally fallacious to maintain that one nation can carry on war, clothed with all the powers of a belligerent, without, by the very act, vesting its enemy with the same rights. The provision of the constitution which places the authority to declare war in Congress, can only allude to the exercise of the affirmative authority; and to advance a contrary doctrine, is to impair that absolute and governing principle of reciprocity on which all international law depends. As it would be possible for a nation in Europe to declare war against a nation in America many weeks before the fact could be known to the party assailed, the former, if the doctrine of Mr. Jefferson were true, would evidently be enjoying a privilege all that time, to the disadvantage of the latter, that is equally opposed to common sense and justice. The error of this opinion was in supposing that, by curtailng and dividing the powers of their servants, the people of the United States meant to limit the rights of the nation. What renders the course of the executive still more singular, is the fact that Commodore Dale had established a blockade, and actually captured neutrals that were entering *Tripoli*, as will be presently seen.

The President appeared off *Tripoli* on the 24th of August, when an ineffectual attempt was made to establish a truce. Remaining eighteen days in the vicinity of the town, and discovering no movement in or about the port, Commodore Dale ran down the coast some distance, when he crossed over to Malta, in order to water his ship. As soon as this necessary duty was performed, the President returned to *Tripoli*, and on the 30th of August, she overhauled a Greek ship bound in, with a cargo of merchandise and provisions. On board this vessel was an officer and twenty *Tripolitan* soldiers besides

twenty other subjects of the regency. All these persons were taken on board the frigate, and an attempt was made, by means of this lucky capture, to establish a system of exchange. The negotiations were carried on through Mr. Nissen, the Danish consul, a gentleman whose name, by means of his benevolence, philanthropy, and probity, has become indissolubly connected with the history of the American marine.

It was soon discovered that the Bashaw cared very little about his subjects, as he declared that he would not exchange one American for all the soldiers. There was a little of the art of the negotiator in this, however, as he agreed in the end, to give three Americans for all the soldiers, the officer included, and three more for eight of the merchants, disclaiming the remaining six merchants as his subjects. Commodore Dale appears to have become disgusted with this unworthy mode of bargaining, for he sent his prisoners on board the Greek again, and allowed the ship to go into Tripoli, relinquishing his claim on the merchants altogether as non-combatants, and consenting to take the three Americans for the soldiers.

Finding it necessary to go down to Gibraltar, the commodore now left Tripoli, and proceeded direct to the former place. He was soon succeeded by the *Essex*, which also appeared off the different Barbary posts.

In the mean time, the two Tripolitan cruisers at Gibraltar, on its being ascertained that it was impossible for them to get out while they were so closely watched, were dismantled, and their crews were privately sent across to Tetuan in boats, to find their way home by land; just men enough being left to take care of the ships, and to navigate them, should an opportunity occur to get to sea. The Bashaw complained loudly of the blockade, as an innovation on the received mode of warfare, and the governments of Algiers and Tunis, which appeared to distrust the precedent, manifested a disposition to join in the protest. The Dey of Algiers even went so far as to ask passports for the crews of the two vessels at Gibraltar, with a view to aid his neighbour; but the request was denied.

While passing, in the manner described, from one port to another, an accident occurred, by which the *President* came near being lost. She had gone into Mahon, and the pilot, miscalculating his draught of water, struck a rock on the starboard hand of that narrow passage, in quitting the harbour. The ship had five or six knots way on her at the time, and she ran up three or four feet before her motion was lost. It was a breathless instant, and the first impression was very general, that she must infallibly go down. Rolling heavily, the hull settled off towards the passage, slid from the rock, and again floated. These are moments that prove the training of the sea-officer, as much as the more brilliant exploits of battle. The commodore instantly appeared on deck, and issued his orders with coolness and discretion. The ship stood through the narrow outlet, and having got room, she was brought to the wind, until the extent of the danger could be ascertained. On sounding the pumps, no more than the usual quantity of water was found, and confidence began to be restored.

Still it was deemed imprudent to run off the land, as the working of so large a ship, in a heavy sea, might open seams that were yet tight. But the elements were against the vessel, for heavy weather set in, and that night it blew a gale of wind. Under the circumstances, Commodore Dale decided to run for Toulon, as the most eligible port in which to repair his damages. This place was reached in safety, when the ship was stripped, lightened, hove out, and examined.

As soon as a view was obtained of the stem as low as its junction with the keel, every one became conscious of the danger that the vessel had run. A large piece forward had been literally twisted off, and a part of the keel, for several feet, was broomed like a twig. Nothing saved the ship but the skilful manner in which the wood-ends had been secured. Instead of the ends of the planks having been let into a rabbetting grooved in the stem itself, they had been fastened into one made by the junction of the apron-piece and the stem, so that when the piece was wrenched off, the seams of the wood-ends remained tight. The French officers, who discovered great science and mechanical skill in making the repairs, expressed their delight at the mode of fastening that had been adopted, which it is believed was then novel, and they were so much pleased with the model of the frigate generally, that they took accurate measurements of all her lines.*

It has been said that the return of Commodore Dale's squadron was ordered to take place on the 1st of December, at the latest, but discretionary powers appear to have been subsequently given to him, as he left the Philadelphia and Essex behind him, and proceeded home with his own ship and the *Enterprise*. The practice of entering men for only a twelvemonth still prevailed, and it was often imperative on vessels to quit stations at the most unfortunate moments. The Philadelphia was left to watch the Tripolitans, making Syracuse in Sicily her port of resort, while the Essex was kept at the straits, to blockade the two vessels at Gibraltar, and guard the passage into the Atlantic. Both ships gave convoys when required.

Thus ended the first year of the war with Tripoli. Although little had been effected towards bringing the enemy to terms, much was done in raising the tone and discipline of the service. At Gibraltar, Malta, and other ports, the finest cruisers of Great Britain were constantly met, and the American ships proving to be entirely their equals, in construction, sailing, and manœuvring, a strong desire was soon excited to render them, in all other respects, as good as those that were then deemed the model-ships of the world. A similar opportunity had occurred while cruising in the West Indies; but then a large proportion of the vessels employed were of inferior qualities, and

* On this occasion, the President was hove out on one side only. In order to fasten, caulk, and copper underneath the keel, the following ingenious plan was adopted: A deep punt, or scow, was sunk, by means of ballast, until its upper edge was brought nearly a-wash. This scow had three compartments, one in the centre to hold the ballast, and one in each end to contain a workman. When sufficiently down in the water, the scow was floated beneath the keel, and as the workman stood erect, and had sufficient room to use his limbs and his tools, it is evident that he could execute his task as readily as any ordinary shipwright on a staging, who was obliged to work above his own head.

some of the officers were unfit to hold commissions in any service. All the purchased ships had now been sold, and the reduction law had cleared the lists of those who would be likely to lessen the ambition, or alarm the pride of an aspiring and sensitive marine. Each day added to the knowledge, tone, esprit de corps, and seamanship of the younger officers; and as these opportunities continued to increase throughout the whole of the Mediterranean service, the navy rapidly went on improving, until the commander of an American ship was as ready to meet comparisons, as the commander of any vessel of war that floated.

CHAPTER XIX.

Mediterranean squadron, under Com. Morris—Resignation of Com. Truxtun—Sketch of his life—The Boston, Capt. M'Niell, carries out Mr. Livingston minister to France—joins the Mediterranean squadron—Notice of Capt. M'Niell—Attack on gun-boats off Tripoli—Explosion on board the New York—Intrepid conduct of Capt. Chauncey—The John Adams, Capt. Rodgers, blockades Tripoli—detains the Meshouda—Bravery of Capt. Porter at Old Tripoli—description of the town and port—Unsuccessful attempt to negotiate a peace—Attack on a Tripolitan corsair, by Capt. Rodgers—After a smart cannonade she blows up—Recall of Com. Morris—He is dismissed from the navy—Remarks—Sketch of his life—Notice of Com. Barry—of Com. Dale.

EARLY in the year 1802, Congress enacted laws that obviated all the constitutional scruples of the executive, and which fully authorised the capture and condemnation of any Tripolitan vessels that might be found. It is worthy of remark, that this law itself did not contain a formal declaration of war, while it provided for all the contingencies of such a state of things, even to empowering the president to issue commissions to privateers and letters of marque; and it may be inferred from the fact, that it was supposed the act of the enemy was sufficient to render the country technically a belligerent. One of the sections of this law, however, was of great service to the navy, by enabling crews to be shipped for two years.

As the *President* and *Enterprise* had returned home, and the time of service of the people of the two ships that were left in the Mediterranean was nearly up, preparations were now made to send out a relief squadron. For this service the following ships were commissioned, viz. the *Chesapeake* 38, Lieutenant Chauncey, acting captain; *Constellation* 38, Captain Murray; *New York* 36, Captain James Barron; *John Adams* 28, Captain Rodgers; *Adams* 28, Captain Campbell; and *Enterprise* 12, Lieutenant Commandant Sterrett. Commodore Truxtun was selected to command this squadron, and he had proceeded to Norfolk for that purpose, when a question arising about allowing him a captain in the flag-ship, he was induced to resign.* Commodore Morris was ap-

* Thomas Truxtun, who will appear no more in our pages, was born on Long Island, New York, February the 17th, 1755, and went early to sea. At the commencement of

pointed to succeed Commodore Truxtun, and shortly after he hoisted his broad pennant in the Chesapeake.

The vessels fitting for the Mediterranean being in different states of forwardness, and there existing a necessity for the immediate appearance of some of them in that sea, they did not sail in a squadron, but as each was ready. The *Enterprise* was the first that left home, sailing in February, and she was followed, in March, by the *Constellation*. The *Chesapeake* did not get out until April, and the *Adams* followed her in June. The two other ships were detained until September. There was, however, one other vessel at sea, all this time, to which it will be necessary to make a brief allusion.

Shortly after his accession to office, in 1801, Mr. Jefferson appointed Mr. Robert R. Livingston minister to France, and the *Boston* 28, Captain M'Niell, was directed to carry the new envoy to his place of destination. This duty performed, the ship had been ordered to join the squadron in the Mediterranean, for service in that sea. The departure of the *Boston* was so timed as to bring her on the station under both commands, that of Commodore Dale, and that of Commodore Morris. This cruise has become memorable in the service, on account of the eccentricities of the officer in command of the ship. After encountering a heavy gale of wind in the Bay of Biscay, in which he discovered perfect seamanship, and the utmost coolness, under circumstances particularly trying, Captain M'Niell landed his passengers, and proceeded to the Mediterranean. Here he cruised for some time, avoiding his senior officers, whenever he could, passing from port to port, appearing off Tripoli, and occasionally affording a convoy. After a time, the *Boston* returned home, and was put out of commission, her commander quitting the service

the Revolution, he entered on board a heavy-armed privateer, in the capacity of a lieutenant, and was frequently engaged with the enemy's letters of marque and privateers. In 1777, he commanded a private cruiser, called the *Independence*, with success, and shortly after, he was transferred to the *Mars*, a ship of some force, in which he made many captures. In 1782, he sailed for France, in the letter of marque *St. James*, with an American agent on board, and had a combat with a heavier vessel, that had been expressly sent out of New York to capture him, which ship he beat off with loss. Captain Truxtun commanded *Indiamen* after the peace of 1783, and in 1794, he was commissioned in the navy, as the fifth captain, and ordered to superintend the construction of the *Constellation* 38, then just laid down at Baltimore. In this ship he went to sea, in the war against France, and in 1799, he captured *l'Insurgente* 36. The following year, he had the well-known and bloody combat with *la Vengeance*; and soon after, he was transferred to the *President* 44. In this vessel, Commodore Truxtun made cruises in the West Indies until the war ended.

Commodore Truxtun twice commanded on the *Guadaloupe* station; previously to quitting the *Constellation*, and subsequently to his hoisting his broad pennant in the *President*. At one time, he had as many as ten vessels under his orders; a force that he directed with zeal, efficiency and discretion. He was a good seaman, and a very brave man. To him belongs the credit of having fought the first battle under the present organisation of the navy, in which he acquitted himself skillfully and with success. The action with *la Vengeance* has always been considered one of the warmest combats between frigates that is on record; and there is not the smallest doubt that he would have brought his enemy into port, but for the loss of his main-mast. Congress awarded him a gold medal for his conduct on that occasion.

It is said Commodore Truxtun did not intend to resign his commission in the navy, in 1802, but simply the command of the squadron to which he had been appointed. The construction put upon his communication by the department, however, was opposed to this idea, and he consequently retired to private life.

After his resignation, Commodore Truxtun filled one or two civil offices. He died in 1822, aged 67.

under the reduction law.* The *Essex* and *Philadelphia* also returned home, as soon as relieved.

We have now reached the summer of 1802, and must confine the narrative of events to the movements of the different vessels that composed the squadron under the orders of Commodore Morris. In some respects, this was the best appointed force that had ever sailed from America. The ships were well officered and manned, and the crews had been entered for two years, or double the usual period. The powers given to the commanding officer, appear to have been more ample than common; and so strong was the expectation of the government that his force was sufficient to bring the enemy to terms, that Commodore Morris was associated with Mr. Cathcart, the late consul at Tripoli, in a commission to negotiate a peace. He was also empowered to obtain gun-boats, in order to protect the American trade in the Straits of Gibraltar.

As there were no means of bringing the Bashaw of Tripoli to terms but blockade and bombardment, two material errors seem to have been made in the composition of the force employed, which it is necessary to mention. There was no frigate in this squadron that carried a long gun heavier than an eighteen-pounder, nor was there any mortar vessel. Heavy carronades had come into use, it is true, and most ships carried more or less of them; but they are guns unsuited to battering under any circumstances, and were particularly unfitted for an assault on works that it is difficult to approach very near, on account of reefs of rocks. There was also a singular deficiency in small vessels, without which a close blockade of a port like Tripoli, was extremely difficult, if not impossible. It will be remembered, that the schooner *Enterprise* was the only vessel left in the navy by the reduction law, that was not frigate-built, and none had yet been launched to supply the defect. The government, however, had become aware of the great importance of light cruisers, and several were laid down in the summer of this year, under authority granted for that purpose.

As has been seen, the *Enterprise* 12, Lieutenant Commandant Sterrett, was the first vessel of the new squadron that reached the Mediterranean. She was soon followed by the *Constellation* 38, Captain Murray, which ship arrived off Tripoli early in May, where she found the *Boston* 28, Captain M'Niell, blockading the port. The latter ship, in a few days, quitted the station, and never re-

* The eccentricities of Captain M'Niell have become traditional in the service. While at Sicily during this cruise, a band belonging to one of the regiments quartered at Massina, was sent on board the ship, and he brought the musicians to America, it is said, without their consent. A portion of these men were on their way back in the *Chesapeake*, in 1807, when that ship was attacked by the *Leopard*. On another occasion he is said to have sailed from Toulon, leaving three of his own officers on shore, and carrying off three French officers who had been dining on board, with a view to keep up his complement! The latter were carried across to the African coast, and put in a fishing vessel: but many months elapsed before all his own officers could rejoin their ship. Captain M'Niell subsequently commanded a revenue cutter, and performed a gallant thing in the war of 1812. He is said to have been the son of the Captain M'Niell who commanded the *Boston* 24, in the war of the Revolution, though we possess no other evidence of this fact than common report. Neither his seamanship, nor his gallantry, was ever questioned.

appeared on it. A Swedish cruiser was also off the port, assisting to blockade.*

After being off the port some time, the *Constellation* was lying three or four leagues from the town, when the look-out aloft reported several small vessels to the westward, stealing along shore. The wind was quite light, and the Swedish frigate, at the moment, was a long distance outside. Sail was got on the *Constellation*, and towards noon the strangers were made out to be seventeen Tripolitan gun-boats, which, as it was afterwards ascertained, had gone out at night, with the intention of convoying into port, an American prize that was expected from Tunis, but which had failed to appear. Fortunately the wind freshened as the *Constellation* drew in with the land, and about one o'clock, hopes were entertained of cutting off all, or a portion of the enemy. The latter were divided into two divisions, however, and that which led, by pulling directly to windward, effected its escape. The division in the rear, consisting of ten boats, was less fortunate, the *Constellation* being enabled to get it, for a short time, under her fire.

The wind blew nearly from the direction of the town, and the Tripolitans still endeavoured to cross the bows of the ship, as she was standing in; but Captain Murray, having run into ten fathoms, opened upon the enemy, time enough to cut off all but one boat of the rear division. This boat, notwithstanding a hot discharge of grape, succeeded in getting to windward, and was abandoned to attend to the remainder. The enemy now opened a fire in return, but the *Constellation* having, by this time, got the nearest boats fairly under her broadsides, soon compelled the whole nine to bear up, and to pull towards the shore. Here they got into nooks behind the rocks, or in the best places of refuge that offered, while a large body of cavalry appeared on the sand-hills above them, to prevent a landing. Deeming it imprudent to send in the boats of a single frigate against so formidable a force, Captain Murray wore and stood off shore, soon after speaking the Swede, who had not been able to close in time to engage.

This little affair was the first that occurred off the port of Tripoli, in this war, and it had the effect of rendering the enemy very cautious in his movements. The gun-boats were a good deal cut up, though their loss was never ascertained. The cavalry, also, suffered materially, and it was said that an officer of high rank, nearly allied to the Bey, was killed. The *Constellation* sustained some trifling damage aloft, but the gun-boats were too hard pressed to render their fire very serious. The batteries opened upon the ship, also, on this occasion, but all their shot fell short.

After waiting in vain for the re-appearance of the *Boston*, Captain Murray was compelled to quit the station for want of water, when Tripoli was again left without any force before it.

The *Chesapeake* 38, Acting Captain Chauncey, wearing the broad pennant of Commodore Morris, reached Gibraltar May 25th, 1802,

* Sweden was at war with Tripoli, at this time, also, but peace was made in the course of the summer.

where she found the *Essex* 32, Captain Bainbridge, still blockading the Tripolitan cruisers. The latter vessel was sent home, and the *Chesapeake*, which had need of repairs, having sprung her mainmast, continued in the straits, for the purpose of refitting, and of watching the enemy. Commodore Morris also deemed it prudent to observe the movements of the government of Morocco, which had manifested a hostile disposition. The arrival of the *Adams* 28, Captain Campbell, late in July, however, placed the flag-ship at liberty, and she sailed with a convoy to various ports on the north shore, having the *Enterprise* in company. This long delay below, of itself, almost defeated the possibility of acting efficiently against the town of Tripoli that summer, since, further time being indispensable to collect the different vessels and to make the necessary preparations, it would bring the ships before that place too late in the season. The fault, however, if fault there was, rested more with those who directed the preparations at home, than with the commanding officer, as the delay at Gibraltar would seem to have been called for, by circumstances. The *Chesapeake*, following the north shore, and touching at many ports, anchored in the roads of Leghorn, on the 12th of October. At Leghorn the *Constellation* was met, which ship shortly after returned home, in consequence of a discretionary power that had been left with the commodore.* Orders were now sent to the different vessels of the squadron to rendezvous at Malta, whither the commodore proceeded, with his own ship. Here, in the course of the month of January, 1803, were assembled the *Chesapeake* 38, Acting Captain Chauncey; *New York* 36, Captain J. Barron; *John Adams* 28, Captain Rodgers, and *Enterprise* 12, Lieutenant Commandant Sterrett. Of the remaining vessels that had been put under the orders of Commodore Morris, the *Constellation* 38, Captain Murray, had gone into a Spanish port to repair some damages received in a gale of wind, and she shortly after sailed for home; the *Boston* 28, Captain M'Niell had not joined, and the *Adams* 28, Captain Campbell was cruising off Gibraltar. On the 30th of January, 1803, the ships first named left Malta with an intention to go off Tripoli, but a severe gale coming on, which lasted eleven days, the commodore was induced to bear up, and to run down to Tunis, where it was under-

* While the ships lay at Leghorn, it blew a gale. The officers of the *Constellation* were on the quarter-deck just at dusk, and they observed a boat of the *Enterprise* going off to the schooner, carrying sail in a way that was thought dangerous. At that moment, the gentlemen were summoned to their supper, and while at table, an alarm was given, of a man overboard. A man, in fact, was found hanging to the rudder chains, and he was got in nearly exhausted. All he could utter was "Sterrett's boat." This recalled the boat that had been seen, and three cutters immediately left the ship to search for the rest of the crew. Lieutenants went in the boats, viz. the present Commodore Stewart, the present Commodore J. Jones, and the regretted Caldwell. The night was very dark, it blew furiously, and the object was almost hopeless. The boats pulled off in different directions, and Mr. Jones picked up a man outside the ship. Mr. Caldwell, after a long pull, found no one. Mr. Stewart went a mile to leeward, and found a man swimming towards the *Melora*, and on returning, against the wind and sea, he met another, senseless, floating with his arms over an oar. Thus were three almost miraculously saved, but the midshipman, Mr. Innes, and three others were drowned. The last man picked up was found by the boat's accidentally hitting the oar that kept him from sinking! The circumstance proves the usefulness of exertions, at such a moment, however hopeless they may appear.

stood the presence of the squadron would be useful. On the 11th of March he left Tunis, touched at Algiers, and anchored again at Gibraltar on the 23d of the month.

The reason assigned for carrying the ships below, when it had been the original design to appear off the enemy's port, was the want of provisions, as well as to make the transfers and arrangements dependent on shifting the pennant of the commanding officer, from the Chesapeake to the New York, the former ship having been ordered home by the navy department. The squadron was now reduced to the New York 36, the Adams 28, the John Adams 28, and the Enterprise 12. Acting Captain Chauncey accompanied the commodore to the first of these vessels, and Captain Barron was transferred to the Chesapeake. The Adams was despatched with a convoy, with orders to go off Tripoli, as soon as the first duty was performed.

On the 10th of April the New York, John Adams, and Enterprise sailed, to touch at Malta on their way to the enemy's port. While making this passage, just as the music had been beating to grog, a heavy explosion was heard near the cock-pit of the flag-ship, and the lower part of the vessel was immediately filled with smoke. It was an appalling moment, for every one on board was aware that a quantity of powder must have exploded, not far from the magazine, that fire was necessarily scattered in the passages, that the ship was in flames, and in all human probability, that the magazine was in danger. Acting Captain Chauncey was passing the drummer when the explosion occurred, and he ordered him to beat to quarters. The alarm had not been given a minute, when the men were going steadily to their guns, and other stations, under a standing regulation, which directed this measure in the event of a cry of fire, as the most certain means of giving the officers entire command of the ship, and of preventing confusion. The influence of discipline was well exhibited on this trying occasion; for, while there is nothing so fearful to the seaman as the alarm of fire, the people went to their quarters, as regularly as in the moments of confidence.

The sea being smooth, and the weather moderate, the commodore himself now issued an order to hoist out the boats. This command, which had been given under the influence of the best feelings of the human heart, was most unfortunately timed. The people had no sooner left the guns to execute it, than the jib-boom, bow-sprit, sprit-sail-yard, knight-heads, and every spot forward was lined with men, under the idea of getting as far as possible from the magazine. Some even leaped overboard and swam for the nearest vessel.

The situation of the ship was now exceedingly critical. With a fire known to be kindled near the magazine, and a crew in a great measure disorganised, the chances of escape were much diminished. But Acting Captain Chauncey rallied a few followers, and reminding them that they might as well be blown up through one deck as three, he led the way below, into passages choked with smoke, where the danger was rapidly increasing. There, by means of wetted blankets, taken from the purser's store-room, and water thrown by hand, he began to contend with the fire, in a spot where a spark scattered

even by the efforts made to extinguish the flames, might, in a single instant, have left nothing of all on board, but their names. Mr. David Porter, the first lieutenant, who meets us in so many scenes of trial and danger, had ascended from the ward-room, by means of a stern ladder, and he and the other officers seconded the noble efforts of their intrepid commander. The men were got in from the spars forward, water was abundantly supplied and the ship was saved.

This accident was supposed to have occurred in consequence of a candle's having been taken from a lantern, while the gunner was searching some object in a store-room that led from the cock-pit. A quantity of marine cartridges, and the powder-horns used in priming the guns, and it is thought that some mealed powder, exploded. Two doors leading to the magazine passage were forced open, and nearly all the adjoining bulkheads were blown down. Nineteen officers and men were injured, of whom, fourteen died. The sentinel at the magazine passage, was driven quite through to the filling-room door.

After the panic caused by quitting the guns to hoist out the boats, all the officers and people of the ship, appear to have behaved well. The order to hoist out the boats, might be explained by natural affection; but we have recorded the whole transaction, as it is replete with instruction to the young officer, on the subject of system, submission to orders, and the observance of method.*

The ships appear to have been detained some time at Malta by the repairs that were rendered necessary in consequence of the accident just mentioned. On the 3d of May, however, the John Adams was sent off Tripoli, alone, with orders to blockade that port. Shortly after this ship reached her station, she made a sail in the offing, which she intercepted. This vessel proved to be the Meshouda, one of the cruisers that had been so long blockaded at Gibraltar, and which was now endeavouring to get home under an assumed character. She had been sold by the Bashaw to the Emperor of Morocco, who had sent her to Tunis, where she had taken in supplies, and was now standing boldly for the harbour of Tripoli. The reality of the transfer was doubted, and as she was attempting to evade a legal blockade, the Meshouda was detained.

About the close of the month, Commodore Morris hove in sight, in the New York, with the Adams and Enterprise in company. As the flag-ship neared the coast, several small vessels, convoyed by a number of gun-boats, were discovered close in with the land, making the best of their way towards the port. Chase was immediately given, and finding themselves cut off from the harbour, the merchant vessels, eleven in all, took refuge in Old Tripoli, while the gun-boats, by means of their sweeps, were enabled to pull under the batteries of the town itself. No sooner did the vessels, small latine-rigged

* It is a tradition of the service, we know not on what foundation, that, when an order was given to a quarter-master to hoist the signal of "a fire on board," in the hurry of the moment he bent on a wrong flag, and the signal for "a mutiny on board," was shown. Captain Rodgers of the John Adams, observing an alarm in the New York, and perceiving smoke issuing from her ports, beat to quarters, and ranged up under the stern of the commodore, with his guns trained, in readiness to fire. The threatened consummation to a calamity that was already sufficiently grave, was prevented by explanations

coasters loaded with wheat, get into Old Tripoli, than preparations were made to defend them. A large stone building stood on a bank some twelve or fifteen feet from the shore, and it was occupied by a considerable body of soldiers. In the course of the night breast-works were erected on each side of this building, by means of the sacks of wheat which composed the cargoes of the feluccas. The latter were hauled upon the beach, high and dry, immediately beneath the building, and a large force was brought from Tripoli, to man the breast-works.

Mr. Porter, the first lieutenant of the flag-ship, volunteered to go in that night, with the boats of the squadron, and destroy the enemy's craft; but, unwilling to expose his people under so much uncertainty, the commodore decided to wait for daylight, in order that the ships might co-operate, and in the hope of intimidating the Tripolitans by a show of all his force. Mr. Porter, however, went in alone and reconnoitered in the dark, receiving a heavy fire from the musketry of the troops when discovered.

Next morning, the offer of Mr. Porter was accepted, and sustained by Lieutenant James Lawrence of the *Enterprise*, and a strong party of officers and men from the other ships, he went boldly in, in open day. As the boats pulled up within reach of musketry, the enemy opened a heavy fire, which there was very little opportunity of returning. Notwithstanding the great superiority of the Turks in numbers, the party landed, set fire to the feluccas, and regaining their boats, opened to the right and left, to allow the shot of the ship to complete the work. The enemy now appeared as desperately bent on preserving their vessels as their assailants, a few minutes before had been bent on destroying them. Regardless of the fire of the ships, they rushed on board the feluccas, succeeded in extinguishing the flames, and, in the end, preserved them.

This attack was made in the most gallant manner, and reflected high credit on all engaged. The parties were so near each other, that the Turks actually threw stones at the Americans, and their fire was sharp, heavy and close. The loss of the enemy could never be ascertained, but a good many were seen to fall. Of the Americans, 12 or 15 were killed and wounded; and among the latter, was Mr. Porter, who received a slight wound in the right, and a musket-ball through the left thigh, while advancing to the attack, though he continued to command to the last. Mr. Lawrence was particularly distinguished, as was Mr. John Downes, one of the midshipmen of the *New York*.*

Commodore Morris determined to follow up this attack on the wheat vessels, by making one on the gun-boats of the enemy. The harbour of Tripoli is formed by an irregularly shaped indentation of the coast, which opens to the north. The greatest depth is about a mile and a half, and the width may be a little more. On its western side, this indentation runs off at an angle of about 25 degrees with

* It is worthy of remark, that this is the fifth instance in which we have had occasion to record the good conduct of Lieutenant David Porter, in four years and the third time he was wounded.

the coast, while on the eastern, the outline of the bay melts into that of the main shore much less perceptibly, leaving the anchorage within a good deal exposed to northeast winds. But at the point where the western angle of the bay unites with the main coast, there is a small rocky peninsula that stretches off in a northeast direction a considerable distance, forming a sort of natural mole, and, at the end of this again, an artificial mole has been constructed in a line extending nearly east-south-east. It is scarcely necessary to add, that the real port is behind this mole, in which there is water for galleys, and where vessels are sufficiently protected from any winds. The town, which is small, crowded, and walled, stretches along the shore of this port, for less than a mile, then retires inland about a thousand feet, and following the general direction of the wall along the harbour, it strikes the sea again at the distance of about a quarter of a mile from the angle at the point of junction between the bay and the coast. Of course, the town extends the latter distance along the open sea. The shore, however, is rocky, though low, and rocks lie in sight at some distance from the beach. On one of these rocks, in front of the end of the town that lies exposed to the sea, a work has been built some distance off in the water, which is called the French Fort. On the natural mole are batteries, one of which is in two tiers; at the end of the artificial mole is another, and several are distributed along the walls of the place.

Near the southeastern angle of the town, and immediately on the shore of the port, stands the Bashaw's castle; the entrance into the inner harbour, or galley mole, lying necessarily between it and the mole-head; the distance between the two being about a quarter of a mile. The advanced peninsula, which forms what we have termed the natural mole, is surrounded by broken rocks, which show themselves above the water, but which suddenly cease within pistol-shot of its batteries. At a distance of a few hundred feet, however, the line of these rocks re-appears, stretching off in a northeasterly direction, about a mile further. These rocks are broken, and have many small passages between them through which it is possible for boats to pull. They form a sort of breakwater to the bay, and the eastern portion of the latter being covered with shoals, the two together make a tolerably safe anchorage within.

A little east of south, from the northeasterly extremity of the rocks, stands Fort English, distant rather more than a mile, on an angle of the coast, that may be said to form the eastern point of the bay, though it is by no means as much advanced as the western. The main entrance is between the end of the rocks and the shoals towards Fort English, the water being deep, and the passage near half a mile wide. Thus a vessel coming from sea, would steer about southwest in entering, and would be exposed to a raking fire from the castle, the mole, and all the adjacent batteries, and a cross fire from Fort English. There is, however, an entrance by the passage between the natural mole and the rocks, or through the open space already mentioned. This is called the western, or the little entrance; it may be six or eight hundred feet in width; and the vessels using it are oblig-

ed to pass close to the batteries of the natural and the artificial moles. As they round the mole-head, they open those of the castle and of the town also.

In addition to the fixed batteries of the place, were the gun-boats and galleys. These boats were large vessels of their class, latine-rigged, capable of going to sea on emergencies, as one of their principal occupations had been to convoy along the coast. Several that were subsequently examined by the American officers, had a brass gun $11\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, with a bore to receive a shot that weighed 29 pounds, mounted in the bows, besides two brass howitzers aft. The guns were fine pieces, and weighed 6600 pounds. When not otherwise engaged, the gun-boats were commonly moored just within the rocks, and without the artificial mole, where they answered the purpose of additional batteries to command the entrance. By this disposition of his means of defence, the Bashaw could, at all times open a fire of heavy guns afloat, on any vessel that ventured close in, in addition to that of his regular works. There were two or three light cruisers moored in the upper part of the harbour, that could be of little use except as against attacks within the rocks, and two galleys. On emergencies, the smaller vessels could take shelter behind the rocks, where they were nearly protected from fire.

At the time of which we are writing, the gun-boats were stationed well out, near the rocks and the mole, in a manner to admit of their giving and receiving a fire; and on the afternoon of the 28th of May, the preparations having been previously made, a signal was shown from the New York, for the John Adams to bear down upon the enemy and commence an attack. Captain Rodgers obeyed the order with promptitude, taking a position within reach of grape, but owing to the lightness of the wind, the two other ships were unable to second her, as was intended. In consequence of these unforeseen circumstances, the attack proved a failure, in one sense, though the boats soon withdrew behind the rocks, and night brought the affair to an end. It is believed that neither party suffered much on this occasion.

The next day Commodore Morris made an attempt to negotiate a peace, through the agency of M. Nissen, the Danish consul, a gentleman who, on all occasions, appears to have been the friend of the unfortunate, and active in doing good. To this proposal the Bey listened, and one of his ministers was empowered to meet the American commander on the subject. Having received proper pledges for his safe return, Commodore Morris landed in person, and each party presented its outlines of a treaty. The result was an abrupt ending of the negotiation.

This occurred on the 8th of June, and on the 10th, the New York and Enterprise left the station, for Malta. At the latter place, Commodore Morris received intelligence concerning the movements of the Algerine and Tunisian corsairs, that induced him to despatch the Enterprise, with orders to Captain Rodgers to raise the blockade of Tripoli, and to join him, as soon as circumstances would permit, at Malta.

After the departure of the flag-ship, the John Adams 28, Captain

Rodgers, and the Adams 28, Captain Campbell, composed the force left before the enemy's port. The speedy return of the *Enterprise* 12, which was then commanded by Lieutenant Commandant Hull, who had succeeded Lieutenant Commandant Sterrett, added that light vessel to the squadron. Some movements in the harbour, on the evening of the 21st of June, induced Captain Rodgers, the senior officer present, to suspect that it was intended to get a cruiser to sea that night, or to cover the return of one to port. With a view to defeat either of these plans, the Adams was sent to the westward, the *Enterprise* to the eastward, while the *John Adams* remained in the offing.

On the following morning, about 7 o'clock, the *Enterprise* was seen to the southward and eastward with a signal flying of an enemy. At that moment, the *John Adams* was a few leagues out at sea, and it was 8 o'clock before the two vessels could speak each other. Captain Rodgers now found that a large ship belonging to the Bashaw, had run into a deep narrow bay, about seven leagues to the eastward of Tripoli, where she had taken a very favourable position for defence, and anchored with springs on her cable. At the same time it was ascertained that nine gun-boats were sweeping along the shore, to aid in defending her, while, as usual, a large body of cavalry was hovering about the coast, to resist any attack by means of boats. The ship was known to be the largest of the Bey's remaining corsairs, mounting 22 guns, and she was very full of men.

Captain Rodgers owed the opportunity that now offered to attack his enemy, to the steadiness and gallantry of Lieutenant Commandant Hull, who, on making his adversary at daylight, had cut him off from the town, with a spirit that did infinite credit to that officer. The Tripolitan was treble the force of the *Enterprise*, and had he chosen to engage the schooner, Mr. Hull would, probably, have been obliged to sacrifice his little vessel, in order to prevent his enemy from getting into port.

The dispositions of Captain Rodgers were soon made. He stood in, with the *Enterprise* in company, until the *John Adams* was within point-blank shot of the enemy, when she opened her fire. A smart cannonade was maintained on both sides, for forty-five minutes, when the people of the corsair abandoned their guns, with so much precipitation, that great numbers leaped overboard, and swam to the shore. The *John Adams* was now in quarter-less-five, by the lead, and she wore with her head off shore. At the same time, the *Enterprise* was ordered to occupy the attention of the enemy on the beach, while boats could be got out to take possession of the abandoned ship. But a boat returning to the corsair, the *John Adams* tacked and renewed her fire. In a few minutes the colours of the corsair were hauled down, and all her guns were discharged; those which were pointed towards the Americans, and those which were pointed towards the land. At the next moment she blew up.

The explosion was very heavy, and it tore the hull of the Tripolitan entirely to pieces. The two after-masts were forced into the air to twice their usual height, with all the yards, rigging, and hamper

attached. The cause of this explosion is unknown, though it might have been thought intentional, were it not for the fact that the people of the boat that had returned to her, were blown up in the ship, none having left her after their arrival. As the shot of the *John Adams* were seen to hull the enemy repeatedly, the corsair is also supposed to have sustained a severe loss before her people first abandoned her.

The *John Adams* and *Enterprise* attempted to cut off the division of gun-boats, but found the water shoal too far to seaward of them, to render the fire of their guns effective. Knowing the whole coast intimately, the latter were enabled to escape.

The ships before Tripoli, in obedience to the orders of Commodore Morris, now sailed for Malta to join that officer, when the whole squadron proceeded to different ports in Italy, together. From Leghorn, the *John Adams* was sent down to the straits with a convoy; the *Adams* to Tunis and Gibraltar, and the *Enterprise* back to Malta, in quest of despatches. Soon after, the *New York*, herself, went below, touching at Malaga, where Commodore Morris found letters of recall. The command was left temporarily with Captain Rodgers, who hoisted a broad pennant in the *New York*, while Commodore Morris took charge of the *Adams*, to proceed to America. Captain Campbell, late of the *Adams*, was transferred to the *John Adams*.

Commodore Morris reached home on the 21st of November, 1803; and the government, which professed great dissatisfaction at the manner in which he had employed the force intrusted to his discretion, demanded the usual explanations. These explanations not proving satisfactory, a Court of Inquiry* was convened, by order of the department, dated March 10th, 1804, and the result was an opinion that this officer had not discovered due diligence and activity in annoying the enemy, on various occasions, between the 8th of January, 1803, and the period of the expiration of his command. In consequence of the finding of the Court of Inquiry, the president dismissed Commodore Morris from the navy.

Whatever may be thought of the justice of the opinion of the court, there can be little question that the act of the executive, in this instance, was precipitate and wrong. The power of removal from office is given to the president to be exercised only on important occasions, and for the public good; and it has been much questioned, whether the power itself is salutary, in the cases of military men. The civilian who does not do his duty, must be replaced immediately, or the office virtually becomes vacant, but no such pressing necessity exists in the army and navy, as subordinates are always ready temporarily to discharge the duties of their superiors. In the navy, this necessity is still less striking than in the army, since officers of the same rank are never wanting to fill vacancies.

But there is a far higher consideration why no military man should ever be deprived of his commission, except in very extraordinary instances, unless by a solemn trial and a formal finding of a court. His profession is the business of a life; his conduct is at all times

* This court consisted of Captain S. Barron. President; Captain Hugh G. Campbell, and Lieutenant John Cassin. Walter Jones, Jun. Esquire, Judge Advocate.

subject to a severe and exacting code, and dismissal infers disgrace. So general, indeed, is the opinion that every officer is entitled to be tried by his peers, that greater disgrace is apt to attach itself to an arbitrary dismissal, by an exercise of executive power, than to the sentence of a court itself, since the first ought only to proceed from conduct so flagrantly wrong, as to supersede even the necessity of trial. There was another motive that ought to have weighed with the government, before it resorted to the use of so high a power. The gentlemen who composed the Court of Inquiry on Commodore Morris, were his juniors in rank, and one was his inferior. Although the characters of these officers were above suspicion, as to motives, the accused, on general principles, had a perfect right to the benefit of the exception, and was entitled to demand all the forms of the service, before he was finally condemned.

It has, more or less, been a leading defect of the civil administration of the military affairs of the American government, that too little of professional feeling has presided in its councils, the men who are elevated to political power, in popular governments, seldom entering fully into the tone and motives of those who are alive to the sensibilities of military pride. One of the consequences of this influence of those who have merely the habits of civilians, on the fortunes of men so differently educated, is to be traced in the manner in which the executive authority just alluded to has been too often wielded; presenting on one side *ex parte* decisions that have been more characterised by precipitation and petulance, than by dignity, justice, or discretion; and on the other, by a feebleness that has too often shrunk from sustaining true discipline, by refusing to confirm the decisions of courts that have deliberately heard and dispassionately sentenced.

The death of Commodore Barry,* the resignations of Commodore Dale,† and Commodore Truxtun, with the dismissals of Commodore

* John Barry was a native of the county of Wexford, Ireland, where he was born in 1745. He came to America a youth, having adopted the life of a seaman as a profession. Circumstances early brought him into notice, and he was one of the first officers appointed to a command in the navy of the united colonies. In command of the Lexington 14, he took the Edward tender, after a smart action, in 1776. In 1777, he performed a handsome exploit in the Delaware, at the head of four boats, carrying an enemy's man-of-war schooner without the loss of a man. For a short time, he also served with the army, during the eventful campaign in New Jersey. In 1778, he made a most gallant resistance against a superior force, in the Raleigh 32, losing his ship, but saving most of his crew. In 1781, in the Alliance 32, he took the Atalanta and Trepassy, after a bloody combat, in which he was severely wounded. In 1782, he fought a close battle with an English ship in the West Indies, being driven off by a superior force that was in sight. At the establishment of the new marine, under the present government in 1794, Captain Barry was named the senior officer, in which station he died.

Commodore Barry, as an officer and a man, ranked very high. His affection to his adopted country was never doubted, and was put to the proof, as the British government is said to have bid high to detach him from its service, during the Revolution. He died childless and greatly respected, September 18th, 1803, in the city of Philadelphia, where he had made his home, from the time of his arrival in the country, and where he had married.

† Richard Dale was born in the year 1757, at a short distance from Norfolk in the colony of Virginia. He went to sea young, and was mate of a vessel in 1775. After serving a short time irregularly Mr. Dale joined the United States brig Lexington in July, 1776, as a midshipman. When the Lexington was taken by the Pearl, Mr. Dale was left in the brig, and he was active in her recapture. The succeeding year he sailed, as a master's mate, in the Lexington; was in her, in her cruise round Ireland, and was captured in her by the Alert, after a long action. Mr. Dale escaped from Mill prison in February,

Morris,* and Captain M'Niell, reduced the list of captains to nine, the number named in the reduction law, for that act does not appear to have been rigidly regarded from the moment of its passage. After the death of Commodore Barry, Commodore S. Nicholson became the senior officer of the service, making the second member of the same family who had filled that honourable station.

1778, was retaken in London, and sent back to confinement. For an entire year he remained a captive, when he escaped a second time, and succeeded in reaching France. Here he joined the celebrated squadron fitting under Paul Jones, an officer who soon discovered his merit, and made him first lieutenant of his own ship, the *Bon Homme Richard*. The conduct of Mr. Dale in that capacity, is recorded in the text. After the cruise in the squadron he went through the British Channel with his commander in the *Alliance* 32, and subsequently came to America with him in the *Ariel* 20, in 1780. Mr. Dale was not yet twenty-three years old, and he appears now to have first obtained the commission of a lieutenant in the navy from the government at home, that under which he had previously acted having been issued in Europe.

Mr. Dale does not appear to have served any more, in public vessels, during the war of the Revolution, but in 1794, he was commissioned as the fourth captain, in the present marine. Captain Dale commanded the *Ganges* 20, the first vessel that went to sea under the new organisation. He continued but a short time in this ship, getting a furlough in 1799, to make an East India voyage. In 1801, he made the cruise in the Mediterranean which has been related in the body of this work, as commander of the squadron, and the following year he resigned.

Few men passed youths more chequered with stirring incidents than Commodore Dale, and few men spent the evening of their days more tranquilly. On quitting the navy, he remained in Philadelphia, in the enjoyment of a spotless name, a competency, and a tranquil mind, up to the hour of his death, which event occurred February 24th, 1826, in the 69th year of his age.

Commodore Dale had the reputation of being both a good officer and a good seaman. He was cool, brave, modest, and just. Notwithstanding his short service in the present marine, he has left behind him a character that all respected, while none envy.

* Richard Valentine Morris belonged to one of the historical families of the country, which has been seated a century and a half at Morrissania, in West Chester county, New York. He was the youngest son of Lewis Morris, of Morrissania, who was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and he early adopted the sea as a profession. Without having had an opportunity of seeing much service, the great influence and fair pretensions of his family, caused him to be appointed to the station of the ninth captain in the new navy, his commission having been dated June 7th, 1798. Captain Morris was probably the youngest man, among those originally named to the rank he held, but he acquitted himself with credit, in the command of the *Adams* 28, during the war with France. At the reduction of the navy, in 1801, Captain Morris was retained as the fifth in rank, and his selection to command the Mediterranean squadron was due to his place on the list; the age and state of health of the few officers above him, rendering them indisposed to actual service of the nature on which he was sent.

The fault of Commodore Morris in managing the force entrusted to him, was merely one of judgment, for neither his zeal nor his courage was ever questioned. Had he been regularly tried by a court-martial, a reprimand, in all probability, would have been the extent of the punishment; and it is due to his character, to add, that his dismissal from the navy has usually been deemed a high-handed political measure, rather than a military condemnation. He lived respected, and died in his original position in life, while attending the legislature at Albany, in 1814. He was considered a good officer, in general, and was a seaman of very fair pretensions.

CHAPTER XX.

Four small cruisers built—Mediterranean squadron, under Com. Preble—Capt. Bainbridge takes the Barbary cruiser, *Meshboha*—afterwards re-takes her prize the *Celia* of Boston—Difficulties with Morocco settled—Remarks on the appointment of Com. Preble—Anecdote respecting him.

THE government soon became aware of the necessity of possessing some light cruisers, which to a marine, are what the eyes and nerves are to men. Without vessels of this character, a commander could never conduct a vigorous blockade, like that required before Tripoli, in particular; and a law passed February, 1803, authorising the construction of two brigs and two schooners. In the course of the spring of that year, these vessels were built, and the navy received an addition to its list, of the *Argus* 16, *Siren* 16, *Nautilus* 12, and *Vixen* 12. The two former were beautiful and very efficient brigs, mounting 16 twenty-four-pound carronades, and 2 long twelves; and the two latter were schooners, carrying 12 eighteen-pound carronades, and 2 light long guns, each. They were all finely modelled and serviceable vessels of their size, and are intimately associated with the earlier traditions of the navy. There was a singular conformity in their fates, also, the whole four in the end, falling into the hands of their enemies.

When Commodore Morris was recalled, the necessity of sending out a new squadron was foreseen, the time of the crews belonging to the ships left under the orders of Commodore Rodgers being so nearly up. Indeed the latter officer, when he hoisted his broad pennant, was notified that a successor must necessarily soon arrive. The new squadron was so differently organised from the two which had preceded it, as to leave little doubt that the administration had discovered the error which had been made in sending so many light frigates on this service; vessels that were nearly useless in a bombardment, while they could not command the shores, and that had no other quality particularly suited to the warfare in which they were engaged, than a fitness to convoy. For the latter employment, even, the same force distributed in twice the number of vessels, would have been much more efficient and safe.

The ships now selected to carry on the war against Tripoli, were of an entirely different description. They consisted of the *Constitution* 44, *Philadelphia* 38, *Argus* 16, *Siren* 16, *Nautilus* 12, *Vixen* 12, and *Enterprise* 12. The latter was already on the station, and it was intended to keep her there, by sending out men to supply the places of those who declined to enter anew. As usual, these vessels sailed as they were ready; the *Nautilus* 12, Lieutenant Commandant Somers, being the first that got to sea. This schooner reached Gibraltar on the 27th of July, 1803. She was soon followed by the *Philadelphia* 38, Captain Bainbridge, which anchored at the same place, August 24th. The *Constitution* 44, bearing the broad pennant

of Commodore Preble, who had been chosen to command the squadron, arrived September 12th ; the Vixen 12, Lieutenant Commandant Smith, September 14th ; the Siren 16, Lieutenant Commandant Stewart, October 1st, and the Argus 16, Lieutenant Commandant Decatur, November 1st. When the last fell in with the Enterprise, Mr. Decatur took command of that schooner, giving up the brig, by arrangement, to Mr. Hull, who was his senior officer.

The Philadelphia barely touched at Gibraltar, but hearing that two Tripolitans were cruising off Cape de Gatt, Captain Bainbridge proceeded, without delay, in quest of them. On the night of the 26th of August, blowing fresh, two sail were made from the Philadelphia, under Cape de Gatt ; the largest of which, a ship, was carrying nothing but a fore course. On running alongside this vessel, and hailing, with a good deal of difficulty, Captain Bainbridge learned that the stranger was a Barbary cruiser. Further examination discovered that this vessel belonged to the Emperor of Morocco, and that she was the Meshboha 22, commanded by Ibrahim Lubarez, and had a crew of one hundred and twenty men.

The Moors were made to believe that the Philadelphia was an English frigate, and they admitted that the brig in company was an American. The suspicions of Captain Bainbridge were now awakened, for he could not well account for the brig being under so little sail, and he sent Mr. Cox, his first lieutenant, on board the Moor, to ascertain if there were any prisoners in his ship. When the boat, with the ordinary unarmed crew, reached the Meshboha, the Moors refused to let the officer come over the side. Captain Bainbridge now directed an armed force to go into the boat, when Mr. Cox succeeded in executing his orders, without further opposition.

Below deck, the boarding officer found the master and crew of the brig in company, which was ascertained to be the Celia of Boston, a prize to the Meshboha. The brig had been captured near Malaga, nine days before ; and there was no doubt that the Moors were waiting for other vessels, Cape de Gatt being a headland commonly made by every thing that keeps the north shore of the Mediterranean aboard.

Captain Bainbridge on receiving this intelligence, did not hesitate about taking possession of the Meshboha. Her people could not all be removed until near daylight ; and during the time that was occupied in transferring them to the frigate, the brig had disappeared. On the afternoon of the 27th, however, she was seen doubling the cape, coming from the eastward, and hugging the land, while she steered in the direction of Almeria, probably with the hope of getting to the westward of the ships, in order to run to Tangiers. Owing to light winds, it was midnight before she could be re-taken.

It was now all important to discover on what authority this capture had been made. The Moorish commander, at first, stated that he had taken the Celia, in anticipation of a war, a serious misunderstanding existing between the Emperor and the American consul, when he left port. This story seemed so improbable that it was not believed, and Captain Bainbridge could only get at the truth by

threatening to execute his prisoner as a pirate, unless he showed his commission. This menace prevailed, and Ibrahim Lubarez presented an order from the Governor of Tangiers, to capture all Americans that he might fall in with.

The Philadelphia returned to Gibraltar with her prizes, and leaving the latter, she went off Cape St. Vincent, in quest of a Moorish frigate that was said to be cruising there. Not succeeding in finding the Moor, Captain Bainbridge ran through the straits again, and went aloft. While at Gibraltar, Mr. David Porter joined him as first lieutenant.*

Shortly after the Philadelphia had gone to her station off Tripoli, the New York 36, Commodore Rodgers, and the John Adams 28, Captain Campbell, reached Gibraltar, in the expectation of meeting the new flag-ship. In a day or two the Constitution came in, as did the Nautilus, which had been giving convoy up the Mediterranean. As soon as Commodore Preble was apprised of the facts connected with the capture of the Meshboha, he saw the necessity of disposing of the question with Morocco, before he left the entrance of the Mediterranean again open, by going off Tripoli. Commodore Rodgers was the senior officer, and his authority in those seas had properly ceased, but, in the handsomest manner, he consented to accompany Commodore Preble to Tangiers, leaving the latter his power to act, as negotiator and commander-in-chief. Accordingly the Constitution 44, New York 36, John Adams 28, and Nautilus 12, went into the Bay of Tangiers, October the 6th, 1803. Commodore Preble, on this occasion, discovered that promptitude, spirit and discretion, which were afterwards so conspicuous in his character; and after a short negotiation, the relations of the two countries were placed on their former amicable footing. The commodore had an interview with the Emperor, which terminated in the happiest results. On the part of Morocco, the act of the Governor of Tangiers was disavowed; an American vessel that had been detained at Mogadore, was released; and the Emperor affixed his seal anew to the treaty of 1786. The commodore then gave up the Meshboha, and it was also agreed to return the Meshouda, the ship taken by the John Adams. Congress, in the end, however, appropriated an equivalent to the captors of those two vessels, in lieu of prize-money.

As soon as the difficulties with Morocco were settled, Commodore Rodgers sailed for America; and Commodore Preble devoted himself with energy and prudence in making his preparations to bring Tripoli to terms. The latter had an arduous task before him; and its difficulties were increased by the circumstance that he was personally known to scarcely an officer under his command. During the war with France, the ships had been principally officered from the states in which they had been built, and Captain Preble, a citizen of New Hampshire, had hitherto commanded vessels under these circumstances. He had sailed for the East Indies in 1800, in the Essex 32, and had been much removed from the rest of the navy, in

* While the ship lay at Gibraltar, three broad pennants were flying on board them, that of Commodore Preble, that of Commodore Morris, and that of Commodore Rodgers.

the course of his service. By one of those accidents that so often influence the affairs of life, all the commanders placed under the orders of Commodore Preble, with the exception of Mr. Hull, came from the middle or the southern states; and it is believed that most of them had never even seen their present commander, until they went in person to report themselves and their vessels. This was not only true of the commanders, but a large portion of the subordinate officers, also, were in the same situation; even most of those in the Constitution herself, having been personally strangers to the commander of the squadron.* The period was now approaching when the force about to be employed before Tripoli, was to assemble, and a service was in perspective that promised to let the whole squadron into the secret of its commander's character. Previously to relating the events that then occurred, however, it will be necessary to return to the movements of the Philadelphia 38, Captain Bainbridge.

CHAPTER XXI.

Blockade of Tripoli resumed—Loss of the Philadelphia on a reef—Captain Bainbridge and all his crew made prisoners—List of the officers' names—Humane conduct of Mr. Nissen, the Danish consul—The Philadelphia is got off by the enemy—her guns and anchors weighed—Capture of the ketch *Mastico*, by Lieut. Comdt. Decatur—His unsuccessful attempt to destroy the Philadelphia—His second attempt—Mr. Charles Morris is the first on her deck—She is recaptured and burnt—Lieut. Comdt. Decatur is raised to the rank of Captain.

It has been seen that the Philadelphia captured the *Meshboha*, on the night of the 26th of August, 1803. The return to Gibraltar, the run off Cape Vincent, and the passage up the Mediterranean brought it late in the season, before that ship could reach her station. Here the *Vixen* 12, Lieutenant Commandant Smith, which schooner had arrived at Gibraltar about the middle of September, appeared also,

* Commodore Preble was a man of high temper, and a rigid disciplinarian. At first he was disliked in his own ship; the younger officers in particular, feeling the effect of his discipline without having yet learned to respect the high professional qualities for which he afterwards became so distinguished. One night while the Constitution was near the Straits of Gibraltar, she suddenly found herself alongside a large ship. Some hailing passed, without either party's giving an answer. Commodore Preble now hailed himself, saying, "I now hail you for the last time; if you do not answer, I'll fire a shot into you!" "If you fire, I'll return a broadside," was the reply. "I should like to catch you at that! I now hail for an answer—what ship is that?" "This is H. B. M. S. *Donegal* 84, Sir Richard Strachan, an English commodore. Send a boat on board." To which Preble answered, "This is the U. S. S. Constitution 44, Edward Preble, an American commodore, and I'll be d—d if I send a boat on board any ship. Blow your matches, boys!" After a short pause, Preble next told the stranger he doubted his statement, and should lie by him, until morning, in order to ascertain his real character. He was as good as his word, but in a short time a boat came from the other vessel to explain. It was the English frigate, *Maidstone*, and the Constitution had got so suddenly and unexpectedly alongside of her, that the hesitation about answering, and the fictitious name, proceeded from a desire to gain time, in order to clear the ship, and to get to quarters. The spirit of Commodore Preble on this occasion, produced a very favourable impression in his own ship; the young men pithily remarking, that if he was wrong in his temper, he was right in his heart.

and the blockade was resumed by these two vessels, the *Enterprise* having gone below. Unfortunately, soon after his arrival, Captain Bainbridge sent the schooner in quest of a Tripolitan cruiser, that he learned from the master of a neutral had got to sea a short time previously. This left the frigate alone, to perform a very delicate service, the blockading vessels being constantly compelled to chase in-shore.

Towards the last of the month of October, the wind, which had been strong from the westward, for some time previously, drove the *Philadelphia* a considerable distance to the eastward of the town, and on Monday, October the 31st, as she was running down to her station again, with a fair breeze, about nine in the morning, a vessel was seen in-shore and to windward, standing for Tripoli. Sail was made to cut her off. Believing himself to be within long gun-shot a little before eleven, and seeing no other chance of overtaking the stranger in the short distance that remained, Captain Bainbridge opened a fire, in the hope of cutting something away. For near an hour longer, the chase and the fire were continued; the lead, which was constantly kept going, giving from seven to ten fathoms, and the ship hauling up and keeping away, as the water shoaled or deepened. At half past eleven, Tripoli then being in plain sight, distant a little more than a league, satisfied that he could neither overtake the chase, nor force her ashore, Captain Bainbridge ordered the helm a-port, to haul directly off the land into deep water. The next cast of the lead, when this order was executed, gave but eight fathoms, and this was immediately followed by casts that gave seven, and six and a half. At this moment, the wind was nearly abeam, and the ship had eight knots way on her. When the cry of "half-six" was heard, the helm was put hard down, and the yards were ordered to be braced sharp up. While the ship was coming up fast to the wind, and before she had lost any of her way, she struck a reef forwards, and shot up on it, until she lifted between five and six feet.

This was an appalling accident to occur on the coast of such an enemy, at that season of the year, and with no other cruiser near! It was first attempted to force the vessel ahead, under the impression that the best water was to sea-ward; but on sounding around the ship, it was found that she had run up with such force, as to lie nearly cradled on the rocks, there being only 14 feet of water under the fore chains, while the ship drew, before striking, $18\frac{1}{2}$ feet forward. Astern there were not 18 feet of water, instead of $20\frac{1}{2}$, which the frigate needed. Such an accident could only have occurred by the vessel's hitting the reef at a spot where it sloped gradually, and where, most probably the constant washing of the element, had rendered the surface smooth; and by her going up, on the top of one of those long, heavy, but nearly imperceptible swells, that are always agitating the bosom of the ocean.

The vessel of which the *Philadelphia* had been in chase was a large *xebec*, and her commander, acquainted with the coast, stood on, inside of the reef, doubled the edge of the shoal, and reached Tripoli in safety. The firing, however, had brought out nine gun-boats,

which now appeared, turning to windward. Not a moment was to be lost, as it would shortly be in the power of these vessels to assail the frigate, almost with impunity. Finding, on further examination, deep water astern, the yards were next braced aback, and the guns were run aft, in the equally vain hope of forcing the ship astern, or to make her slide off the sloping rocks on which she had run so hard. It was some time, before this project was abandoned, as it was the most practicable means of getting afloat.

On a consultation with his officers, Captain Bainbridge next gave orders to throw overboard the guns, reserving a few aft, for defence; the anchors, with the exception of the larboard bower, were cut from the bows. Before this could be effected the enemy came within gunshot, and opened his fire. Fortunately, the Tripolitans were ignorant of the desperate condition of the *Philadelphia*, and were kept at a respectful distance, by the few guns that remained; else they might have destroyed most of their crew, it being certain that the colour would not be struck, so long as there was any hope of getting the ship afloat. The cannonade, which was distant and inefficient, and the business of lightening the frigate went on at the same time, and occupied several hours.

The enemy finally became so bold, that they crossed the stern of the frigate, where alone they were at all exposed to her fire, and took a position on her starboard, or weather quarter. Here it was impossible to touch them, the ship having heeled to port, in a way to render it impracticable to bring a single gun to bear, or, indeed, to use one at all, on that side.

Captain Bainbridge now called another council of his officers, and it was determined to make a last effort to get the vessel off. The water casks, in the hold, were started, and the water was pumped out. All the heavy articles that could be got at, were thrown overboard, and finally the fore-mast was cut away, bringing down with it the main-top-gallant-mast. Notwithstanding all this, the vessel remained as immovable as the rocks on which she lay.

The gun-boats were growing bolder every minute, others were approaching, and night was at hand. Captain Bainbridge, after consulting again with his officers, felt it to be an imperious duty to haul down his flag, to save the lives of the people. Before this was done, however, the magazine was drowned, holes were bored in the ship's bottom, the pumps were choked, and every thing was performed that it was thought would make sure of the final loss of the vessel. About five o'clock the colours were lowered.

It is a curious circumstance that this was the second instance in which an American vessel of war had been compelled to haul down her flag, since the formation of the new marine, and that in each case the same officer commanded. After the accounts given in this work, it is unnecessary to add that on both occasions an imperious necessity produced this singular coincidence.

The ship had no sooner struck than the gun-boats ran down alongside of her, and took possession. The barbarians rushed into the vessel and began to plunder their captives. Not only were the

clothes which the Americans had collected in their bags and in bundles, taken from them, but many officers and men were stripped half naked. They were hurried into boats, and sent to Tripoli, and even on the passage the business of plundering went on. The officers were respected little more than the common men, and, while in the boat, Captain Bainbridge himself, was robbed of his epaulets, gloves, watch, and money. His cravat was even torn from his neck. He wore a miniature of his wife, and of this the Tripolitans endeavoured to deprive him also, but, a youthful and attached husband, he resisted so seriously that the attempt was relinquished.

It was near 10 o'clock at night, when the boats reached the town. The prisoners were landed in a body, near the bashaw's palace, and they were conducted to his presence. The prince received his captives in an audience hall, seated in a chair of state, and surrounded by his ministers. Here Captain Bainbridge was formally presented to him, as his prisoner, when the bashaw himself, directed all the officers to be seated. The minister of foreign affairs, Mohammed D'Ghies, spoke French, and through him, the bashaw held a conversation of some length with Captain Bainbridge. The latter was asked many questions concerning the Philadelphia, the force of the Americans in the Mediterranean, and he was civilly consoled for his captivity, by being reminded that it was merely the fortune of war.

When the conversation had ended, the officers were conducted to another apartment, where a supper had been provided, and as soon as this meal had been taken by those who had the hearts to eat, they were lead back to the audience hall, and paid their parting compliments to the bashaw. Here the captives were informed that they were put under the special charge of Sidi Mohammed D'Ghies, who conducted them to the house that had lately been the American consulate. The building was spacious and commodious, but almost destitute of furniture. It was one o'clock in the morning, but at that late hour even, appeared Mr. Nissen, the Danish consul, bringing with him the consolations of sympathy and hope. This benevolent man, was introduced to Captain Bainbridge, by Mohammed D'Ghies, as his personal friend, and as one on whose honour, humanity and good faith, full reliance might be placed. Mohammed D'Ghies, himself, was known by reputation to Captain Bainbridge, and he had shown delicacy and feeling in the exercise of his trust. His recommendation, which was pointedly significant, coupled with the manner of Mr. Nissen, excited a confidence that in the end proved to be most worthily bestowed. Every thing that could be devised at that unseasonable hour, was done by Mr. Nissen. This was but the commencement of a series of indefatigable and unwearying kindness that endured to the last moment of the captivity of the Americans.

The misfortunes that befell the Philadelphia, made a material difference in the state of the war. Until this moment, the bashaw had received but little to compensate him for the inconvenience to which he was put by the blockade, and for the loss of his different cruisers. His corsairs had captured but very few merchant vessels, and they ran the greatest risks, whenever they appeared out of their own ports.

As yet, it is true, nothing had been attempted against his town, but he knew it was at any time liable to a bombardment. It was thought, therefore, that he was not indisposed to peace when accident threw the crew of the *Philadelphia* so unexpectedly into his power.

The bashaw, however, had now a hold upon his enemy, that, agreeably to the usages of Barbary, enabled him to take much higher ground in proposing his terms. In his previous negotiations, he had asked a large sum as the price of the few captives he then held, but the demand had been rejected as unreasonable and exorbitant. On board the *Philadelphia* were three hundred and fifteen souls, and among them were no less than twenty-two quarter-deck officers,* gentlemen in whose fortunes the bashaw well knew there would be a lively interest felt, to say nothing of the concern that a government like that of America was expected to manifest for the fate of its seamen. Under these circumstances, therefore, the divan of Tripoli felt strongly encouraged to continue the war, in the hope of receiving a high ransom for the prisoners, and in the expectation of holding a check on the measures of its enemy, by its means of retaliation.

The *Philadelphia* ran on a reef on the 31st of October, and her people were landed during the night of the same day. The Tripolitans set about their arrangements to get the ship off, next morning, and as they were near their own port, had so many gun-boats and galleys at their disposal, and were unmolested by any cruiser, it was announced to the bashaw that there were hopes of saving the frigate. In the course of the 2d of November, it came on to blow fresh from the northwest, and the wind forcing the water up on the African coast, while it bore on the larboard quarter of the ship, her stern was driven round, and she floated, in part, though she continued to thump, as the seas left her. Anchors were now carried out, all the disposable force of the town was applied, and on the 5th November, the *Philadelphia* was got into deep water. The same day, she was brought within two miles of the city, where she was compelled to anchor, on account of the state of the weather. Here she was kept afloat by means of pumping, while men were employed in stopping the leaks. The business of scuttling appears to have been but imperfectly performed, a few holes having been merely bored in the bottom of the ship, instead of cutting through the planks, as had been ordered. The weather continuing remarkably fine, the Turks finally succeeded in not only getting the frigate into port, but in weighing all her guns and anchors, which lay in shallow water on the reef, as well as in getting up nearly every thing else that had been thrown overboard. The ship was partially repaired, her guns were remounted,

* William Bainbridge, Captain; David Porter, first lieutenant; Jacob Jones, second do.; Theodore Hunt, third do.; Benjamin Smith, fourth do.; William Osborn, lieutenant of marines; John Ridgely, surgeon; J. Cowdery, do. mate; Nicholas Harwood, do. do.; Keith Spence, purser; and Barnard Henry, James Gibbon, Benjamin Franklin Reed, James Renshaw, Wallace Wormley, Robert Gamble, James Biddle, Richard R. Jones, Daniel T. Patterson, Simon Smith, and William Cutbush, midshipmen; William Anderson, captain's clerk. Of these gentlemen, Messrs. J. Jones, Renshaw, and Biddle are still in service, and have all worn broad pennants. Dr. Cowdery is the oldest surgeon now in the navy.

and she was moored off the town, about a quarter of a mile from the bashaw's castle.

Leaving Captain Bainbridge, and his fellow-sufferers, to endure the privations and hardships of a captivity in Barbary, it is now necessary to return to the other vessels of the American squadron, to do which we must go back a few days in the order of time.

Commodore Preble, on his return from Tangiers to Gibraltar, on the 15th of October, went round to Cadiz; soon after, he re-appeared at the former place, made a formal announcement of the blockade of Tripoli, on the 12th of November, on which day the ship he believed to be in the active execution of that duty, was in the possession of the enemy, and on the 13th he sailed for Algiers. After landing a consul at the latter place, he proceeded to Malta, off which port he arrived on the 27th of November. Here he was met by letters from Captain Bainbridge, and he obtained a confirmation of the loss of the Philadelphia, a rumour of which event had reached him lower down the coast. The Constitution sailed immediately for Syracuse, and got in next day.

On the 17th of December, 1803, Commodore Preble, after making his preparations and disposing of his force in different ways, sailed for Tripoli, with the Enterprise in company, off which place he now appeared for the first time. The 23d of the month, the Enterprise 12, Lieutenant Commandant Decatur, fell in with and captured a ketch, called the Mastico, with seventy souls on board. The Mastico had been a French gun-vessel in Egypt, that had been taken by the English and had passed into the hands of the Tripolitans. She was now bound to Constantinople, with a present of female slaves for the Porte. A few days after this prize was taken, it came on to blow heavily from the northeast, and finding the frigate in danger of being lost on the coast, at that tempestuous season, Commodore Preble returned to Syracuse; not, however, until he had reconnoitered his enemy, and formed his plan of operations for the future. Means had been found to communicate with Captain Bainbridge, also, and several letters were received from that officer, pointing out different methods of annoying the enemy.

In a letter of the date of the 5th of December, 1803, Captain Bainbridge suggested the possibility of destroying the Philadelphia, which ship was slowly fitting for sea, there being little doubt of her being sent out as a cruiser, as soon as the mild season should return. Commodore Preble listened to the suggestion, and being much in the society of the commander of the vessel that was most in company with the Constitution, Lieutenant Stephen Decatur, he mentioned the project to that spirited officer. The expedition was just suited to the ardour and temperament of Mr. Decatur, and the possession of the Mastico at once afforded the means of carrying it into effect. The ketch was accordingly appraised, named the Intrepid, and taken into the service, as a tender. About this time, Lieutenant Commandant Stewart, of the Siren, the officer who was then second in command in the Mediterranean, and who had just arrived from below, offered to cut out the Philadelphia with his own brig; but Commo-

dore Preble was pledged to Mr. Decatur, who, at first, had proposed to run in with the *Enterprise* and carry the ship. The more experienced Preble rejected the propositions of both these ardent young men, substituting a plan of his own.

Although Commodore Preble declined the proposal of Mr. Decatur to carry in the *Enterprise*, the projected service was assigned to the commander and crew of that schooner. It being necessary, however, to leave some of her own officers and people in her, a selection of a few gentlemen to join in the expedition, was made from the flagship, and orders to that effect were issued accordingly. These orders were dated February the 3d, 1804, and they directed the different gentlemen named to report themselves to Lieutenant Commandant Decatur, of the *Enterprise*. As it was intended that the crew of the schooner should furnish the entire crew of the ketch, it was not thought proper to add any men to this craft. In short, the duty was strictly assigned to the *Enterprise*, so far as her complement could furnish the officers required. On the afternoon of the 3d, according to the orders they had just received, Messrs. Izard, Morris, Laws, Davis, and Rowe, midshipmen of the *Constitution*, went on board the schooner, and reported themselves for duty to her commander. All hands were now called in the *Enterprise*, when Lieutenant Commandant Decatur acquainted his people with the destination of the ketch, and asked for volunteers. Every man and boy in the schooner presented himself, as ready, and willing to go. Sixty-two of the most active men were selected, and the remainder, with a few officers, were left to take care of the vessel. As the orders to destroy the frigate, and not to attempt to bring her out, were peremptory, the combustibles, which had been prepared for this purpose, were immediately sent on board the *Intrepid*, her crew followed, and that evening the ketch sailed, under the convoy of the *Siren* 16, Lieutenant Commandant Stewart, who was properly the senior officer of the expedition, though, owing to the peculiar nature of the service, Mr. Decatur was permitted to conduct the more active part of the duty, at his own discretion.

The party in the ketch consisted of Lieutenant Commandant Decatur; Lieutenants Lawrence, Bainbridge, and Thorn; Mr. Thomas M'Donough,* midshipman, and Dr. Heerman, surgeon; all of the *Enterprise*;—Messrs. Izard, Morris, Laws, Davis, and Rowe, midshipmen, of the *Constitution*; and Salvatore Catalano the pilot, with sixty-two petty officers and common men, making a total of seventy-four souls.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the accommodations were none of the best, with so many persons cooped up in a vessel of between forty and fifty tons; and to make the matter worse, it was soon found that the salted meat put on board was spoiled, and that there was little besides bread and water left to subsist on. The weather, however, was pleasant, and the wind favourable, and the two vessels got in sight of Tripoli on the afternoon of the 9th. To prevent suspi-

* Mr. Thomas M'Donough, afterwards so distinguished, had belonged to the *Philadelphia*, but escaped captivity by being left at Gibraltar in the prize *Mesheboha*.

cions, the *Intrepid* now went ahead of the *Siren*; and a little after dark, she had stretched in quite near to the coast, with a breeze at southwest, anchoring about a mile to windward of the town. Shortly after, the *Siren*, disguised brought-to a little to seaward of her. The night came on dark and threatening, but it was in some respects so favourable to the enterprise, that Mr. Decatur was reluctant to let it pass without making the attempt. The pilot, however, pronounced it extremely hazardous to venture in among the rocks at that moment, as he thought the sea must be breaking across the entrance, by which it was proposed to pass. Under the circumstances, Mr. Decatur, who displayed as much conduct and prudence as daring gallantry throughout this whole affair, sent Mr. Morris and the pilot, in a boat with muffled oars, to reconnoitre. This young officer pulled close up to the western passage, and ascertained that the sea was so high that it was, in fact, breaking entirely across the entrance; when he returned and reported that it would be hazardous to go in, and that to come out would be impossible.

The report was scarcely needed, for, by this time, the wind had risen so high, and so much sea had got up, that in hoisting in the boat, it was stove, and when the anchor was weighed, for it was necessary to get off the land as soon as possible, it was found to be broken. The *Siren* had anchored a little without the ketch, and had hoisted out and armed her boats, which were to cover the retreat, but she, too, was compelled to get under way, by the increasing violence of the wind. Several hours were employed in a vain attempt to get her anchor, the brig rolling gunwales-to, and a good many of her people, together with Lieutenant Commandant Stewart, were hurt by the capstan's running away with the bars. In the end, the weather came on so bad, and the danger of being seen as the day dawned was so much increased, that the anchor and cable were left, the latter having been cut.

So sudden and violent was the gale, that there had been no communication between the two vessels, the *Siren* having no other intimation of the departure of the ketch, than by seeing her light as she stretched out to sea. Luckily, the wind was well to the westward, and both vessels got an offing before they were seen from Tripoli. Here they lay to, with their heads off shore, certain of being far enough to leeward, to be out of sight in the morning. The wind began to haul to the northward, and the gale lasted six days, during which time great fears were entertained of the ketch's foundering at sea, or of her being, at least, driven on the coast, the change in the wind having brought the vessels on a lee shore. Before the wind abated, they were driven up into the Gulf of Sydra, where they were fairly embayed.

On the 15th the weather moderated, and the brig and ketch, which had kept in company, notwithstanding the gale, endeavoured to fetch in with the land, and in the course of the night they got so near, as to reconnoitre and ascertain their position. Finding themselves too far to the eastward to effect any thing that night, they hauled off again, in order to escape detection. The next day, about noon, cal-

culating that they were abreast of the town, and the wind and weather being, in all respects, favourable, both vessels kept away, the ketch leading some distance, in order that the enemy might not suppose her a consort of the Siren's although the latter was so much disguised, as to render it impossible to recognise her. The wind was fair, but light, and every thing looking favourable, Mr. Decatur now seriously made his dispositions for the attack. Apprehensive that they might have been seen, and that the enemy had possibly strengthened the party on board the frigate, Lieutenant Commandant Stewart sent a boat and eight men from the Siren, to the ketch, under the orders of one of his midshipmen, Mr. Anderson, which reinforcement increased the numbers of the intended assailants to eighty-two, all told.

The orders of Lieutenant Commandant Decatur were clear and simple. The spar-deck was first to be carried, then the gun-deck; after which the following distribution of the party was made, in order to set fire to the ship. Mr. Decatur, with Messrs. Izard and Rowe, and fifteen men, was to keep possession of the upper deck. Mr. Lawrence, with Messrs. Laws and M'Donough and ten men, was to repair to the berth-deck and forward store-rooms. Mr. Bainbridge, with Mr. Davis and ten men, was to go into the ward-room and steerage; Mr. Morris, with eight men, was to go into the cockpit and after store-rooms; Mr. Thorn, with the gunner and surgeon, and thirteen men, was to look after the ketch; to Mr. Izard was assigned the command of the launch should she be needed, and Mr. Anderson, with the Siren's cutter, was to secure all boats alongside of the ship, and to prevent the people from swimming ashore, with directions, however, to board as soon as the first duty was performed.

Fire-arms were to be used only in the last extremity, and the first object of every one was to clear the upper-deck and gun-deck of the enemy. The watch-word was "Philadelphia." These arrangements were plain and judicious.

As the ketch drew in with the land, the ship became visible. She lay not quite a mile within the entrance, riding to the wind, and abreast of the town. Her fore-mast, which had been cut away while she was on the reef, had not yet been replaced, her main and mizen-top-masts were housed, and her lower yards were on the gunwales. Her lower standing rigging, however, was in its place, and, as was shortly afterwards ascertained, her guns were loaded and shotted. Just within her, lay two corsairs, with a few gun-boats, and a galley or two.

It was a mild evening for the season, and the sea and bay were smooth as in summer; as unlike as possible to the same place a few days previously, when the two vessels had been driven from the entrance by a tempest. Perceiving that he was likely to get in too soon, when about five miles from the rocks, Mr. Decatur ordered buckets and other drags to be towed astern, in order to lessen the way of the ketch, without shortening sail, as the latter expedient would have been seen from the port, and must have awakened suspicion. In the mean time the wind gradually fell, until it became so light as

to leave the ketch but about two knot's way on her, when the drags were removed.

About 10 o'clock the *Intrepid* reached the eastern entrance of the bay, or the passage between the rocks and the shoal. The wind was nearly east, and, as she steered directly for the frigate, it was well abaft the beam. There was a young moon, and as the bold adventurers were slowly advancing into the hostile port, all around them was tranquil and apparently without distrust. For near an hour they were stealing slowly along, the air gradually failing, until their motion became scarcely perceptible.

Most of the officers and men of the ketch had been ordered to lie on the deck, where they were concealed by low bulwarks, or weather-boards, and by the different objects that belong to a vessel. As it is the practice of those seas, to carry many men even in the smallest craft, the appearance of ten or twelve would excite no alarm, and this number was visible. The commanding officer, himself, stood near the pilot, Mr. Catalano,* who was to act as interpreter. The quartermaster at the helm, was ordered to stand directly for the frigate's bows, it being the intention to lay the ship aboard in that place, as the mode of attack which would least expose the assailants to her fire.

The *Intrepid* was still at a considerable distance from the *Philadelphia*, when the latter hailed. The pilot answered that the ketch belonged to Malta, and was on a trading voyage; that she had been nearly wrecked, and had lost her anchors in the late gale, and that her commander wished to ride by the frigate during the night. This conversation lasted some time, Mr. Decatur instructing the pilot to tell the frigate's people with what he was laden, in order to amuse them, and the *Intrepid* gradually drew nearer, until there was every prospect of her running foul of the *Philadelphia*, in a minute or two, and at the very spot contemplated. But the wind suddenly shifted, and took the ketch aback. The instant the southerly puff struck her, her head fell off, and she got a stern-board, the ship, at the same moment, tending to the new current of air. The effect of this unexpected change was to bring the ketch directly under the frigate's broadside, at the distance of about forty yards, where she lay becalmed, or, if any thing, drifting slowly astern, exposed to nearly every one of the *Philadelphia's* larboard guns.

Not the smallest suspicion appears to have been yet excited on board the frigate, though several of her people were looking over the rails, and notwithstanding the moonlight. So completely were the Turks deceived, that they lowered a boat, and sent it with a fast. Some of the ketch's men, in the mean time, had got into her boat, and had run a line to the frigate's fore chains. As they returned, they met the frigate's boat, took the fast it brought, which came from the after part of the ship, and passed it into their own vessel. These fasts were put into the hands of the men, as they lay on the ketch's deck, and they began cautiously to breast the *Intrepid* alongside of the *Philadelphia*, without rising. As soon as the latter got near

*Late a sailing-master in the navy



COMMODORE
STEPHEN DECATUR, U.S.N.

enough to the ship, the Turks discovered her anchors, and they sternly ordered the ketch to keep off, as she had deceived them; preparing, at the same time, to cut the fasts. All this passed in a moment, when the cry of "Amerikanos" was heard in the ship. The people of the *Intrepid* by a strong pull, brought their vessel alongside of the frigate, where she was secured, quick as thought. Up to this moment, not a whisper had betrayed the presence of the men concealed. The instructions had been positive to keep quiet until commanded to show themselves, and no precipitation, even in that trying moment, deranged the plan.

Lieutenant Commandant Decatur was standing ready for a spring, with Messrs. Laws and Morris quite near him. As soon as close enough, he jumped at the frigate's chain-plates, and while clinging to the ship himself, he gave the order to board. The two midshipmen were at his side, and all the officers and men of the *Intrepid* arose and followed. The three gentlemen named were in the chains together, and Lieutenant Commandant Decatur and Mr. Morris sprang at the rail above them, while Mr. Laws dashed at a port. To the latter would have belonged the honour of having been first in this gallant assault, but wearing a boarding-belt, his pistols were caught between the gun and the side of the port. Mr. Decatur's foot slipped in springing, and Mr. Charles Morris first stood upon the quarter-deck of the *Philadelphia*. In an instant, Lieutenant Commandant Decatur and Mr. Laws were at his side, while heads and bodies appeared coming over the rail, and through the ports in all directions.

The surprise appears to have been as perfect, as the assault was rapid and earnest. Most of the Turks on deck crowded forward, and all ran over to the starboard-side, as their enemies poured in on the larboard. A few were aft, but as soon as charged, they leaped into the sea. Indeed, the constant plunges into the water, gave the assailants the assurance that their enemies were fast lessening in numbers by flight. It took but a minute or two to clear the spar-deck, though there was more of a struggle below. Still, so admirably managed was the attack, and so complete the surprise, that the resistance was but trifling. In less than ten minutes Mr. Decatur was on the quarter-deck again, in undisturbed possession of his prize.

There can be no doubt that this gallant officer now felt bitter regrets, that it was not in his power to bring away the ship he had so nobly recovered. Not only were his orders on this point peremptory, however, but the frigate had not a sail bent, nor a yard crossed, and she wanted her foremast. It was next to impossible, therefore, to remove her, and the command was given to pass up the combustibles from the ketch.

The duty of setting fire to the prize, appears to have been executed with as much promptitude and order, as every other part of the service. The officers distributed themselves, agreeably to the previous instructions, and the men soon appeared with the necessary means. Each party acted by itself, and as it got ready. So rapid were they all in their movements, that the men with combustibles had

scarcely time to get as low as the cock-pit and after-store-rooms, before the fires were lighted over their heads. When the officer entrusted with the duty last mentioned, had got through, he found the after-hatches filled with smoke, from the fire in the ward-room and steerage, and he was obliged to make his escape by the forward ladders.

The Americans were in the ship from twenty to twenty-five minutes, and they were literally driven out of her by the flames. The vessel had got to be so dry in that low latitude, that she burnt like pine; and the combustibles had been as judiciously prepared, as they were steadily used. The last party up, were the people who had been in the store-rooms, and when they reached the deck, they found most of their companions already in the *Intrepid*. Joining them, and ascertaining that all was ready, the order was given to cast off. Notwithstanding the daring character of the enterprise in general, Mr. Decatur and his party now ran the greatest risk they had incurred that night. So fierce had the conflagration already become, that the flames began to pour out of the ports, and the head-fast having been cast off, the ketch fell astern, with her jigger flapping against the quarter-gallery, and her boom foul. The fire showed itself in the window, at this critical moment; and beneath, was all the ammunition of the party, covered with a tarpaulin. To increase the risk, the stern-fast was jammed. By using swords, however, for there was not time to look for an axe, the hawser was cut, and the *Intrepid* was extricated from the most imminent danger, by a vigorous shove. As she swung clear of the frigate, the flames reached the rigging, up which they went hissing, like a rocket, the tar having oozed from the ropes, which had been saturated with that inflammable matter. Matches could not have kindled with greater quickness.

The sweeps were now manned. Up to this moment, every thing had been done earnestly, though without noise, but as soon as they felt that they had got command of their ketch again, and by two or three vigorous strokes had sent her away from the frigate, the people of the *Intrepid* ceased rowing, and as one man, they gave three cheers for victory. This appeared to arouse the Turks from their stupor, for the cry had hardly ended, when the batteries, the two corsairs, and the galley, poured in their fire. The men lay hold of the sweeps again, of which the *Intrepid* had eight of a side, and favoured by a light air, they went rapidly down the harbour.

The spectacle that followed, is described as having been both beautiful and sublime. The entire bay was illuminated by the conflagration, the roar of cannon was constant, and Tripoli was in a clamour. The appearance of the ship was, in the highest degree, magnificent; and to add to the effect, as her guns heated, they began to go off. Owing to the shift of wind, and the position into which she had tended, she, in some measure, returned the enemy's fire, as one of her broadsides was discharged in the direction of the town, and the other towards Fort English. The most singular effect of this conflagration was on board the ship, for the flames having run up the rigging and masts, collected under the tops, and fell over, giving the whole the appearance of glowing columns and fiery capitals.

Under ordinary circumstances, the situation of the ketch would still have been thought sufficiently perilous, but after the exploit they had just performed, her people, elated with success, regarded all that was now passing, as a triumphant spectacle. The shot constantly cast the spray around them, or were whistling over their heads, but the only sensation they produced, was by calling attention to the brilliant *jets d'eau* that they occasioned as they bounded along the water. But one struck the Intrepid, although she was within half a mile of many of the heaviest guns for some time, and that passed through her top-gallant sail.

With sixteen sweeps, and eighty men elated with success, Mr. Decatur was enabled to drive the little Intrepid ahead with a velocity that rendered towing useless. Near the harbour's mouth, he met the Siren's boats, sent to cover his retreat, but their services were scarcely necessary. As soon as the ketch was out of danger, he got into one, and pulled aboard the brig, to report to Lieutenant Commandant Stewart, the result of his undertaking.

The Siren had got into the offing some time after the Intrepid, agreeably to arrangements, and anchored about three miles from the rocks. Here she hoisted out the launch and a cutter, manned and armed them, and sent them in, under Mr. Caldwell, her first lieutenant. Soon after the brig weighed, and the wind having entirely failed outside, she swept into eight fathoms water, and anchored again, to cover the retreat, should the enemy attempt to board the Intrepid, with his gun-boats. It will readily be supposed that it was an anxious moment, and as the moon rose, all eyes were on the frigate. After waiting in intense expectation near an hour, a rocket went up from the Philadelphia. It was the signal of possession, and Mr. Stewart ran below to get another for the answer. He was gone only a moment, but when he returned, the fire was seen shining through the frigate's ports, and in a few more minutes, the flames were rushing up her rigging, as if a train had been touched. Then followed the cannonade, and the dashing of sweeps, with the approach of the ketch. Presently a boat was seen coming alongside, and a man, in a sailor's jacket, sprang over the gangway of the brig. It was Decatur, himself, to announce his victory!

The ketch and brig lay near each other, for about an hour, when a strong and favourable wind arose, and they made sail for Syracuse, which port they reached on the 19th. Here the party was received with salutes and congratulations, by the Sicilians, who were also at war with Tripoli, as well as by their own countrymen.

The success of this gallant exploit laid the foundation of the name which Mr. Decatur subsequently acquired in the navy. The country applauded the feat generally; and the commanding officer was raised from the station of a lieutenant to that of a captain. Most of the midshipmen engaged, were also promoted, and Lieutenant Commandant Decatur received a sword.*

* Notwithstanding his merit, the propriety of making Mr. Decatur a captain was much questioned. When the news reached America, his name was before the senate, under nomination, as the youngest master and commander of eight, but, on receiving the intelligence of his success, it was withdrawn, and sent in for a captain's commission.

The Philadelphia was a frigate of the class that the English termed a thirty-eight, previously to the war of 1812. Her armament consisted of 28 eighteens, on her gun-deck, and of 16 carronades and chase guns, above; or of 44 guns in the whole. No correct estimate has probably ever been made of the number of men in her, when she was re-captured. Twenty were reported to have been killed, and one boat loaded with Turks is said to have escaped; many also swam ashore, or to the nearest cruisers. Some, no doubt, secreted themselves below, of whom the greater part must have perished in the ship, as the party that set fire to the after-store-rooms had difficulty in escaping from the flames. But one prisoner was made, a wounded Turk, who took refuge in the ketch. On the part of the Americans but a single man was hurt.*

In whatever light we regard this exploit it extorts our admiration and praise; the boldness in the conception of the enterprise, being even surpassed by the perfect manner in which all its parts were executed. Nothing appears to have been wanting, in a military point of view; nothing was deranged; nothing defeated. The hour was well chosen, and no doubt it was a chief reason why the corsairs, gun-boats, and batteries, were, in the first place, so slow in commencing their fire, and so uncertain in their aim when they did open on the Americans. In appreciating the daring of the attempt, we have only to consider what might have been the consequences had the assault on the frigate been repulsed. Directly under her guns, with a harbour filled with light cruisers, gun-boats, and galleys, and surrounded by forts and batteries, the inevitable destruction of all in the Intrepid must have followed. These were dangers that cool steadiness and entire self-possession, aided by perfect discipline, could alone avert. In the service, the enterprise has ever been regarded as one of its most brilliant achievements, and to this day, it is deemed a high honour to have been among the Intrepid's crew. The effect on the squadron then abroad can scarcely be appreciated, as its seamen began to consider themselves invincible, if not invulnerable, and were ready for any service in which men could be employed.

* It would seem that the bottom of the Philadelphia floated to the rocks, where what remains still lies. In 1844, the Cumberland 44, Capt. Breese, visited Tripoli, when that officer caused some portions of the wreck to be brought off. A leaf-cutter made of this interesting relic, has been presented to the author, by his old friend the Commander of the Cumberland.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Mediterranean squadron is re-inforced—Capture of the *Transfer*, by the *Siren*, Lieut. Comdt. Stewart—Assistance obtained from the Two Sicilies—First bombardment of Tripoli—Attack on the enemy's gun-boats—Fierce combat and capture of two boats, by Lieut. Comdt. Decatur—Lieut. James Decatur, of the *Nautilus*, killed—Gallant conduct of Lieut. Trippe—he captures one of the largest gun-boats—Rally of the enemy—they are driven back.

THUS opened the year 1804. The great distance, however, that lay between the seat of war and the country, as well as the infrequency of direct communications, prevented the government at home, from getting early information of what was passing in the Mediterranean. As a consequence, at the very moment when Commodore Preble was beginning to show that energy for which he was so remarkable, the department was making preparations for superseding him in the command, not from dissatisfaction, but, as was then believed, from necessity. There were but three captains in the navy junior to Preble, and one of these was a captive in Tripoli. The loss of the *Philadelphia* had rendered it indispensable to send out another frigate, at least, and the administration had now begun to take so serious a view of the state of the relations of the country with all the Barbary powers, as to see the importance of exhibiting a force that should look down any further attempts on a trade, which, in consequence of the general war that prevailed in Europe, was beginning to whiten the seas of the old world with American canvass. The Emperor of Morocco, who was said to be a relative of the Bashaw of Tripoli, was distrusted in particular, and many little occurrences had served to prove the interest that the former felt in the affairs of the latter.

As soon as the president was apprised of the loss of the *Philadelphia*, therefore, orders had been given to prepare the required additional force. So little, however, had the real government of the country attended to this all-important branch of public defence, that it was far easier to command the equipment of a single frigate, than to get her to sea, within a reasonable time. In 1804, the mercantile tonnage of the United States was actually about 1,000,000 tons, and yet the country did not possess a single dock, public or private, between Maine and Georgia. The unmeaning clamour against all improvements of this nature, which had commenced with the existence of the new administration, was still continued, and, as is too often witnessed in the indiscriminate and unprincipled strife of parties, they who professed to be the warmest advocates of an active and growing marine, were the loudest in declaiming against those very measures, without which no navy can ever be efficient, or even moderately useful. In the actual state of the public mind, the direct method of procuring those indispensable requisites of a marine, dock-yards, were not attempted, but very insufficient substitutes had been obtained by putting a liberal construction on the law authorising the building of the six seventy-fours, for which purpose building yards

were thought to be necessary. In this manner, as many navy yards, as they were called, for neither had a dock, were purchased, and an humble commencement of these indispensable establishments was made at Gosport, Washington, Philadelphia, Brooklyn, Charlestown, and Portsmouth, N. H. Thus, in the great interests connected with a navy, as in every thing else in a country that is so eminently practical, and in which few have sufficient leisure to cultivate theories, the facts were still leading opinion, and the gallant men who were slowly fighting themselves into favour, were merely performing an office that would seem to be inseparable from the advancement of every free people in civilisation.

The ships that it was now decided to send into the Mediterranean, were the *President* 44, Congress 38, *Constellation* 38, and *Essex* 32. They were put in commission early in the season, and as soon as the choice was made, Commodore Preble was apprised of it, and of the necessity that existed of sending out two officers who were his seniors in rank. About the same time, Mr. Decatur was made a captain, for the destruction of the *Philadelphia*, and the service received an important impulse in the revival of the rank of masters and commanders, which, it will be remembered, had been dropped altogether, under the reduction law of 1801. At the time the *Philadelphia* was retaken and burnt, there were six lieutenants in the Mediterranean acting as lieutenants-commandant, Messrs. Stewart, Hull, Smith, Somers, Decatur, and Dent, and of these, four were senior to the one just promoted. As Lieutenant Commandant Stewart was the second in command in the Mediterranean, as well as the oldest lieutenant of the service, and as he had actually accompanied the expedition in person, aiding with his counsel, and ready to act on an emergency, it was thought that something more ought to have been done for the gentlemen over whose heads Mr. Decatur had been elevated. When raised to be a captain, Mr. Decatur was the eighth officer of his station in the navy, and it would have been more in conformity with the practices of old and well established marines, to have promoted all his seniors, as they were all known to be qualified, and several had already distinguished themselves, even in commands. But it was premature to expect this systematic justice in a service so young, and which might still be said to be struggling for its existence, and the class of masters and commanders was simply re-established, Messrs. Charles Stewart, Isaac Hull, Andrew Sterrett, John Shaw, Isaac Chauncey, John Smith, Richard Somers, and George Cox, being the gentlemen who were first appointed to this rank after it had been renewed in the service. These promotions, which were connected with the establishment of a new rank, were dated in May, 1804, although all of the gentlemen concerned, who were abroad, continued to serve in their old capacities, until quite near the close of the season.*

* It is a fact worthy of being mentioned, that this rank was revived purely on executive responsibility, and it is believed totally without law. The commissions, though issued in the name of the President, were not signed by that functionary, nor was the Senate consulted in the matter. In short, it may be questioned if one of the promotions was legal, though the right of the parties to command was indisputable, as the relative rank was not disturbed.

The *Siren* and *Intrepid* returned to Syracuse, after the successful attempt on the *Philadelphia*, on the 19th of February of this year. On the 2d of March, Commodore Preble who had so divided his force as to keep some of the small vessels off Tripoli blockading, proceeded to Malta, and on his return, he sailed again, on the 21st, for the station off the enemy's port. The *Siren* 16, Lieutenant Commandant Stewart, and *Nautilus* 12, Lieutenant Commandant Somers, were the blockading vessels at this time, and, early one morning, while coming from the eastward to recover lost ground, a vessel with the appearance of a brig of war was seen lying-to in the offing. As soon as he made the Americans, the stranger endeavoured to beat back into the harbour again, out of which he had lately come, but, the *Nautilus* being sent close in to employ the gun-boats, should they attempt to come out, the *Siren* cut him off from the port, and soon got alongside. This vessel proved to be the *Transfer*, a privateer out of Malta, with a British commission, and she had an armament of 16 carronades, and a crew of 80 men. When the *Siren* ran alongside, the *Transfer*'s people were at quarters, but no resistance being attempted, she was captured for a violation of the blockade. Subsequent information induced Commodore Preble to believe that she belonged, in fact, to the Bashaw of Tripoli, and that the commission under which she sailed was obtained by means of the Tripolitan consul in Malta, who was a native of that island, and for whose appearance on board the brig was actually waiting when taken.

As the *Transfer* had been an English gun-brig, and was equipped for war, Commodore Preble sent her to Syracuse, where she was appraised, manned, and taken into the service for the time being. She was called the *Scourge*, and the command of her was given to Lieutenant Commandant Dent, the acting captain of the *Constitution*.*

Remaining off Tripoli, a few days, Commodore Preble was next actively employed in running from port to port, in order to look into the affairs of the different regencies, to communicate with the captives in Tripoli, and to make his arrangements for pursuing a warfare better suited to bringing the bashaw to terms. The king of the Two Sicilies being at war with Tripoli, also, in furtherance of the latter duty, the *Constitution* went to Naples, in order to obtain some assistance in executing these projects. Here an order for two bomb-vessels and six gun-boats was obtained, with the necessary equipments, and Commodore Preble sailed for Messina, where the different craft lay. From this time until the middle of July, he was as actively engaged as ever, in providing for the wants of the captives, in settling a serious difficulty with Tunis, and in preparing for an attack on Tripoli; and we shall quit him, for a moment, to return to movements before that place.

* Mr. Jefferson is said to have carried his hostility to blockades so far, as to refuse to suffer the *Transfer* to be regularly condemned, although, after her arrival in America, she was sold, and the money was put in the treasury. In the war of 1812, eight or ten years after her capture, the brig was legally condemned, and the prize-money was paid in 1815!

In April, the *Siren*, Lieutenant Commandant Stewart; *Argus*, Lieutenant Commandant Hull; *Enterprise*, Lieutenant Commandant Decatur; *Vixen*, Lieutenant Commandant Smith, and *Scourge*, Lieutenant Commandant Dent, composed the blockading force, when a felucca was seen stealing along shore, coming from the westward, with a view to enter the harbour in a fog. A general chase ensued, and the felucca took refuge behind a reef of rocks, about ten miles to the westward of Tripoli, where she was run upon a beach of sand. The *Siren* now made a signal for the boats to go in, in order to destroy the enemy. Mr. Caldwell, the first lieutenant of the *Siren*, being nearest in, went ahead with the launch and cutter of that brig, while the others followed as the vessels came up. As he approached the shore, the boat of Mr. Caldwell got on a sunken rock, and the enemy, who had begun to collect in force, particularly in cavalry, opened a sharp fire of musketry. Several of the Americans were killed and wounded, and perceiving that the enemy were both too strong and too well posted to be attacked by so feeble a force, Mr. Caldwell returned, directing the different boats, as he met them, to retire also.

The *Argus* and schooners now obtained positions where they could throw their shot into the felucca, which was soon rendered unseaworthy. While this was doing, the *Siren* ran down, opened a ravine in which the Turks were posted, and dislodged them by a smart discharge of grape. Afterwards, a broadside or two were thrown in among a strong body of cavalry, which had the effect of rendering them cautious in their operations on the coast. This little affair illustrates the nature of the ordinary warfare that was then carried on, the Tripolitans sending out bodies of soldiers to cover any vessel that was expected with supplies. On this occasion, the felucca was said to be loaded with salt, an article that then bore an enormous price in Tripoli.

It was July the 21st, 1804, when Commodore Preble was able to sail from Malta, with all the force he had collected, to join the vessels cruising off Tripoli. The blockade had been kept up with vigour for some months, and the commodore felt that the season had now arrived for more active operations. He had with him the *Constitution*, *Enterprise*, *Nautilus*, the two bomb-vessels and the six gun-boats. The bomb-vessels were only of thirty tons measurement, and carried a thirteen-inch mortar each. In scarcely any respect were they suited for the duty that was expected of them. The gun-boats were little better, being shallow, unseaworthy craft, of about twenty-five tons burthen, in which long iron twenty-fours had been mounted. Each boat had one gun, and thirty-five men; the latter, with the exception of a few Neapolitans, being taken from the different vessels of the squadron. The Tripolitan gun-boats, which have already been described, were altogether superior, and the duty should have been exactly reversed, in order to suit the qualities of the respective craft; the boats of Tripoli having been built to go on the coast, while those possessed by the Americans were intended solely for harbour defence. In addition to their other bad qualities, these Neapolitan

boats were found neither to sail nor to row even tolerably well. It was necessary to tow them, by larger vessels, the moment they got into rough water; and when it blew heavily, there was always danger of towing them under. In addition to this force, Commodore Preble had obtained six long twenty-six-pounders for the upper-deck of the Constitution, which were mounted in the waist.

When the American commander assembled his whole force before Tripoli, on the 25th of July, 1804, it consisted of the Constitution 44, Commodore Preble; Siren 16, Lieutenant Commandant Stewart; Argus 16, Lieutenant Commandant Hull; Scourge 14, Lieutenant Commandant Dent; Vixen 12, Lieutenant Commandant Smith; Nautilus 12, Lieutenant Commandant Somers; Enterprise 12, Lieutenant Commandant Decatur; the two bomb-vessels, and six gun-boats. In some respects this was a well appointed force for the duty required, while in others it was lamentably deficient. Another heavy ship, in particular, was wanted, and the means for bombarding had all the defects that may be anticipated. The two heaviest brigs had armaments of twenty-four-pound carronades; the other brig, and two of the schooners, armaments of eighteen-pound carronades; while the Enterprise retained her original equipment of long sixes, in consequence of her ports being unsuited to the new guns. As the Constitution had a gun-deck battery of thirty long twenty-fours, with six long twenty-sixes, and some lighter long guns above, it follows that the Americans could bring twenty-two twenty-fours and six twenty-sixes to bear on the stone walls of the town, in addition to a few light chase-guns in the small vessels, and the twelve-pounders of the frigate's quarter-deck and fore-castle. On the whole, there appears to have been in the squadron, twenty-eight heavy long guns, with about twenty lighter, that might be brought to play on the batteries simultaneously. Opposed to these means of offence, the bashaw had one hundred and fifteen guns in battery, most of them quite heavy, and nineteen gun-boats that, of themselves, so far as metal was concerned, were nearly equal to the frigate. Moored in the harbour were also two large galleys, two schooners, and a brig, all of which were armed and strongly manned. The American squadron was manned by one thousand and sixty persons, all told, while the bashaw had assembled a force that has been estimated as high as twenty-five thousand, Arabs and Turks included. The only advantages possessed by the assailants, in the warfare that is so soon to follow, were those which are dependent on spirit, discipline, and system.

The vessels could not anchor until the 28th, when they ran in, with the wind at E. S. E., and came-to, by signal, about a league from the town. This was hardly done, however, before the wind came suddenly round to N. N. W., thence to N. N. E., and it began to blow strong, with a heavy sea setting directly on shore. At 6 P. M., a signal was made for the vessels to weigh, and to gain an offing. Fortunately, the wind continued to haul to the eastward, or there would have been great danger of towing the gun-boats under, while carrying sail to claw off the land. The gale continued to increase

until the 31st, when it blew tremendously. The courses of the Constitution were blown away, though reefed, and it would have been impossible to save the bomb-vessels and gun-boats, had not the wind hauled so far to the southward as to give them the advantage of a weather shore, and of comparatively smooth water. Fortunately, the gale ceased the next day.

On the third of August, 1804, the squadron ran in again and got within a league of the town, with a pleasant breeze at the eastward. The enemy's gun-boats and galleys had come outside of the rocks, and were lying there in two divisions; one near the eastern, and the other near the western entrance, or about half a mile apart. At the same time, it was seen that all the batteries were manned, as if an attack was not only expected, but invited.

At half-past 12, the Constitution wore with her head off shore, and showed a signal for all vessels to come within hail. As he came up, each commander was ordered to prepare to attack the shipping and batteries. The bomb-vessels and gun-boats were immediately manned, and such was the high state of discipline in the squadron, that in one hour, every thing was ready for the contemplated service.

On this occasion, Commodore Preble made the following distribution of that part of his force, which was manned from the other vessels of his squadron.

One bombard was commanded by Lieutenant Commandant Dent, of the Scourge.

The other bombard by Mr. Robinson, first lieutenant of the Constitution.

First Division of gun-boats.

No. 1. Lieut. Com. Somers, of the Nautilus.

“ 2. Lieut. James Decatur, of the Nautilus.

“ 3. Lieut. Blake, of the Argus.

Second division of gun-boats.

No. 4. Lieut. Com. Decatur, of the Enterprise.

“ 5. Lieut. Bainbridge, of the Enterprise.

“ 6. Lieut. Trippe, of the Vixen.

At half past one, the Constitution wore again, and stood towards the town. At two, the gun-boats were cast off, and formed in advance, covered by the brigs and schooners, and half an hour later, the signal was shown to engage. The attack was commenced by the two bombards, which began to throw shells into the town. It was followed by the batteries, which were instantly in a blaze, and then the shipping on both sides opened their fire, within reach of grape.

The eastern, or most weatherly division of the enemy's gun-boats, nine in number, as being least supported, was the aim of the American gun-boats. But the bad qualities of the latter craft were quickly apparent, for, as soon as Mr. Decatur steered towards the enemy, with an intention to come to close quarters, the division of Mr. Somers, which was a little to leeward, found it difficult to sustain him. Every effort was made by the latter officer, to get far enough to windward to join in the attack, but finding it impracticable, he bore up, and ran down alone on five of the enemy to leeward, and engaged

them all within pistol-shot, throwing showers of grape, cannister, and musket-balls among them. In order to do this, as soon as near enough, the sweeps were got out, and the boat was backed astern to prevent her from drifting in among the enemy. No. 3 was closing fast, but a signal of recall* being shown from the *Constitution*, she hauled out of the line to obey, and losing ground, she kept more aloof, firing at the boats and shipping in the harbour, while No. 2, Mr. James Decatur, was enabled to join the division to windward. No. 5, Mr. Bainbridge, lost her latine-yard, while still in tow of the *Siren*, but, though unable to close, she continued advancing, keeping up a heavy fire, and finally touched on the rocks.

By these changes, Lieutenant Commandant Decatur† had three boats that dashed forward with him, though one belonged to the division of Mr. Somers, viz. No. 4, No. 6, and No. 2. The officers in command of these three boats, went steadily on, until within the smoke of the enemy. Here they delivered their fire, throwing in a terrible discharge of grape and musket-balls, and the order was given to board. Up to this moment, the odds had been as three to one against the assailants, and it was now, if possible increased. The brigs and schooners could no longer assist. The Turkish boats were not only the heaviest and the best in every sense, but they were much the strongest manned. The combat now assumed a character of chivalrous prowess and of desperate personal efforts, that belongs to the middle ages, rather than to struggles of our own times. Its details, indeed, savour more of the glow of romance, than of the sober severity that we are accustomed to associate with reality.

Lieutenant Commandant Decatur took the lead. He had no sooner discharged his shower of musket-balls, than No. 4 was laid alongside the opposing boat of the enemy, and he went into her, followed by Lieutenant Thorn, Mr. M'Donough, and all the Americans of his crew. The Tripolitan boat was divided nearly in two parts, by a long open hatchway, and as the people of No. 4 came in on one side, the Turks retreated to the other, making a sort of ditch of the open space. This caused an instant of delay, and, perhaps, fortunately, for it permitted the assailants to act together. As soon as ready, Mr. Decatur charged round each end of the hatchway, and after a short struggle, a portion of the Turks were piked and bayoneted, while the rest submitted, or leaped into the water.‡

No sooner had Mr. Decatur got possession of the boat first assailed, than he took her in tow, and bore down on the one next to leeward. Running the enemy aboard, as before, he went into him, with most of his officers and men. The captain of the Tripolitan vessel was a large powerful man, and Mr. Decatur personally charged him with a pike. The weapon, however, was seized by the Turk, wrested from

* This signal was bent on by mistake, and was abroad a moment only, but the fact that it was shown, was established before a Court of Inquiry, which exonerated Mr. Blake from censure.

† He was Captain Decatur at the time, but the fact was not yet known in the squadron.

‡ It is probable that the crew of this boat was in a measure staggered by the close fire of the gun, as No. 4 approached, her captain having received no fewer than fourteen musket-balls in his body, by that one discharge.

the hands of the assailant, and turned against its owner. The latter parried a thrust, and made a blow with his sword at the pike, with a view to cut off its head. The sword hit the iron, and broke at the hilt, and at the next instant the Turk made another thrust. Nothing was left to the gallant Decatur, but his arm, with which he so far averted the blow, as to receive the pike through the flesh of one breast. Pushing the iron from the wound, by tearing the flesh, he sprang within the weapon, and grappled his antagonist. The pike fell between the two, and a short trial of strength succeeded, in which the Turk prevailed. As the combatants fell, however, Mr. Decatur so far released himself as to lie side by side with his foe on the deck. The Tripolitan now endeavoured to reach his poniard, while his hand was firmly held by that of his enemy. At this critical instant, when life or death depended on a moment well employed, or a moment lost, Mr. Decatur drew a small pistol from a pocket, passed the arm that was free round the body of the Turk, pointed the muzzle in, and fired. The ball passed entirely through the body of the Musselman, and lodged in the clothes of his foe. At the same instant, Mr. Decatur felt the grasp that had almost smothered him relax, and he was liberated. He sprang up, and the Tripolitan lay dead at his feet.

In such a *mêlée* it cannot be supposed that the struggle of the two leaders would go unnoticed. An enemy raised his sabre to cleave the skull of Mr. Decatur, while he was occupied by his enemy, and a young man of the *Enterprise's* crew interposed an arm to save him. The blow was intercepted, but the limb was severed to a bit of skin. A fresh rush was now made upon the enemy, who was overcome without much further resistance.

An idea of the desperate nature of the fighting that distinguished this remarkable assault, may be gained from the amount of the loss. The two boats captured by Lieutenant Commandant Decatur, had about eighty men in them, of whom fifty-two are known to have been killed and wounded; most of the latter very badly. As only eight prisoners were made who were not wounded, and many jumped overboard, and swam to the rocks, it is not improbable that the Turks suffered still more severely. Lieutenant Commandant Decatur himself being wounded, he secured his second prize, and hauled off to rejoin the squadron; all the rest of the enemy's division that were not taken, having by this time, run into the harbour, by passing through the openings between the rocks.

While Lieutenant Commandant Decatur was thus employed to windward, his brother, Mr. James Decatur, the first lieutenant of the *Nautilus*, was nobly emulating his example in No. 2. Reserving his fire like No. 4, this young officer dashed into the smoke, and was on the point of boarding, when he received a musket ball in his forehead. The boats met and rebounded; and in the confusion of the death of the commanding officer of No. 2, the Turk was enabled to escape, under a heavy fire from the Americans. It was said, at the time, that the enemy had struck before Mr. Decatur fell, though the fact

must remain in doubt. It is, however, believed that he sustained a very severe loss.

In the mean time, Mr. Trippe, in No. 6, the last of the three boats that were able to reach the weather division, was not idle. Reserving his fire, like the others, he delivered it with deadly effect, when closing, and went aboard of his enemy in the smoke. In this instance, the boats also separated by the shock of the collision, leaving Mr. Trippe, with Mr. J. D. Henley, and nine men only, on board the Tripolitan. Here, too, the commanders singled each other out, and a severe personal combat occurred, while the work of death was going on around them. The Turk was young, and of a large athletic form, and he soon compelled his slighter but more active foe to fight with caution. Advancing on Mr. Trippe, he would strike a blow and receive a thrust in return. In this manner, he gave the American commander no less than eight sabre wounds in the head, and two in the breast; when, making a sudden rush, he struck a ninth blow on the head, which brought Mr. Trippe upon a knee. Rallying all his force in a desperate effort, the latter, who still retained the short pike with which he fought, made a thrust that passed the weapon through his gigantic adversary, and tumbled him on his back. As soon as the Tripolitan officer fell, the remainder of his people submitted.

The boat taken by Mr. Trippe, was one of the largest belonging to the bashaw. The number of her men is not positively known, but, living and dead, thirty-six were found in her, of whom twenty-one were either killed or wounded. When it is remembered that but eleven Americans boarded her, the achievement must pass for one of the most gallant on record.*

All this time the cannonade and bombardment continued without ceasing. Lieutenant Commandant Somers, in No. 1, sustained by the brigs and schooners, had forced the remaining boats to retreat, and this resolute officer pressed them so hard, as to be compelled to ware within a short distance of a battery of twelve guns, quite near the mole. Her destruction seemed inevitable, as the boat came slowly round, when a shell fell into the battery, most opportunely blew up the platform, and drove the enemy out, to a man. Before the guns could be again used the boat had got in tow of one of the small vessels.

There was a division of five boats and two galleys of the enemy, that had been held in reserve within the rocks, and these rallied their retreating countrymen, and made two efforts to come out and intercept the Americans and their prizes, but they were kept in check by the fire of the frigate and small vessels. The Constitution maintained a very heavy fire, and silenced several of the batteries, though they

* While Mr. Trippe was so hard pressed by his antagonist, a Turk aimed a blow at him, from behind, but just before the latter struck, Sergeant Meredith, of the marines, passed a bayonet through his body. While the prizes were hauling off, no one had thought, in the confusion of such a scene, of lowering the flag of the Tripolitan boat, and she was seen advancing with the enemy's ensign set. The Vixen gave her a broadside, which brought down colours, mast, latine-yard, and all. Fortunately, no one was hurt.

re-opened as soon as she had passed. The bombards were covered with the spray of shot, but continued to throw shells to the last.

At half past four, the wind coming round to the northward, a signal was made for the gun-boats and bomb-vessels to rejoin the small vessels, and another to take them and the prizes in tow. The last order was handsomely executed by the brigs and schooners, under cover of a blaze of fire from the frigate. A quarter of an hour later, the Constitution herself hauled off, and ran out of gun-shot.

Thus terminated the first serious attack that was made on the town and batteries of Tripoli. Its effect on the enemy, was of the most salutary kind; the manner in which their gun-boats had been taken, by boarding, having made a lasting and deep impression. The superiority of the Christians in gunnery, was generally admitted before, but here was an instance in which the Turks had been overcome, by inferior numbers, hand to hand, a species of conflict in which they had been thought particularly to excel. Perhaps no instance of more desperate fighting of the sort, without defensive armour, is to be found in the pages of history. Three gun-boats were sunk in the harbour, in addition to the three that were taken, and the loss of the Tripolitans by shot, must have been very heavy. About fifty shells were thrown into the town, but little damage appears to have been done in this way, very few of the bombs, on account of the imperfect materials that had been furnished, exploding. The batteries were a good deal damaged, but the town suffered no essential injury.

On the part of the Americans, only 14 were killed and wounded in the affair, and all of these, with the exception of one man, belonged to the gun-boats. The Constitution, though under fire two hours, escaped much better than could have been expected. She received one heavy shot through her main-mast, had a quarter-deck gun injured,* and was a good deal cut up aloft. The enemy had calculated his range for a more distant cannonade, and generally overshot the ships. By this mistake, the Constitution had her main-royal yard shot away.

On the occasion of the battle of the 3d of August, the officers who had opportunities of particularly distinguishing themselves, were Lieutenants Commandant Decatur and Somers; Lieutenants Trippe, Decatur, Bainbridge, and Thorn, and Messrs. M'Donough, Henley, Ridgely, and Miller. But the whole squadron behaved well; and the Constitution was handled, under the fire of the batteries, with the steadiness of a ship working into a roadsted.

* A shot came in aft, hit the gun, and broke in several pieces. Commodore Preble was directly in its range, but he escaped by the shot's breaking. One of the fragments took off the tip of a marine's elbow, quite near him.

CHAPTER XXIII.

• Capt. Morris boards and carries a French privateer by surprise—Three captured gun-boats brought into service—Second bombardment—Gun-boat, No. 8, blown up—Lieut. Caldwell and Mr. Kennedy among the killed—Notice of Mr. Kennedy—Arrival of the John Adams, Capt. Chauncey—The Bashaw is disposed to treat—his propositions rejected—Third bombardment, without effect—Fourth bombardment—does much injury to the town—Capt. Bainbridge (a prisoner in the castle) is wounded in his bed by the rebound of a shot—Fifth bombardment—New disposition of the forces—The enemy's batteries silenced by the brisk fire of the Constitution.

THE vessels hauled off and anchored about two leagues from Tripoli, to repair their damages. On the morning of the 5th, the Argus brought to a small French privateer that had just got out of the harbour, and Commodore Preble induced her commander to return and carry in all the badly wounded among his prisoners.* From the captain of this vessel, he learned that the enemy had suffered even more than had been expected in the attack of the 3d, particularly in and about the port. On the 7th, the privateer came out, bringing a letter from the French consul, stating that the bashaw was much more disposed to treat than previously to the late affair, and advising the commodore to send in a flag of truce, with a view to negotiate. As the castle made no signal to support this proposition, it was not regarded.

Between the 3d and the 7th, the squadron was occupied in altering the rig of the three captured gun-boats, and in putting them in a condition for service. As soon as the latter were equipped, they were numbered 7, 8, and 9, and the command of them was given to Lieutenants Crane, Caldwell, and Thorn. At 9 A. M., on the 7th, the light vessels weighed, and the bombards proceeded to take a position in a small bay to the westward of the town, where they were not much exposed to shot. At half past 2, the bombards, having gained their anchorage, commenced throwing shells, and the gun-boats opened a heavy fire on the batteries. The effect on the latter was soon apparent, and many of their guns were rendered useless. In the height of the cannonade, a strange vessel appeared in the offing, and the Argus was sent in chase. The enemy now began to get his galleys and gun-boats in motion, and once or twice they advanced toward the opening between the rocks, and commenced a fire; but the Constitution, Nautilus, and Enterprise, being stationed to windward to cut them off, and the Siren and Vixen lying near the American gun-vessels to cover the latter, the enemy, after the lesson received on the 3d, were afraid to venture.

At half past 3, or after the action had lasted about an hour, a shot passed through the magazine of No. 8, Lieutenant Caldwell, the boat taken by Mr. Trippe in the affair of the 3d, and she immediately blew up. When the smoke cleared away, all the after part of the boat

* Mr. Morris of the Argus was rowing guard, close in, when he found himself unexpectedly alongside of a strange sail. Without hesitating, he boarded and carried her by surprise, when she proved to be the privateer in question.

was under water, while Mr. Robert T. Spence, of the *Siren*, and 11 men, were forward, loading the long twenty-six-pounder that formed her armament. This gun was loaded, and fired, and its gallant crew gave three cheers, as their vessel sunk beneath them. Mr. Spence, who could not swim, saved himself on an oar, while the rest of the people got on board the different boats, where they continued to fight during the remainder of the action.

No. 8, when she blew up, had a crew of 28 persons in all, of whom 10 were killed and 6 wounded. Among the former was Mr. Caldwell, her commander, the first lieutenant of the *Siren*, and Mr. Dorsey, a midshipman of the same vessel. These two officers were greatly regretted, as both bade fair to be ornaments to their profession.*

At half past 5, or after the cannonade had lasted nearly three hours, the *Constitution* made a signal for the brigs and schooners to take the bombards and gun-boats in tow, and the squadron hauled off for its anchorage again. Just at this time, the *Argus* made a signal that the sail in sight was a friend.

The gun-boats, in this attack, suffered considerably. In consequence of the wind's being on-shore, Commodore Preble had kept the frigate out of the action, and the enemy's batteries had no interruption from the heavy fire of that ship. Several of the American boats had been hulled, and all suffered materially in their sails and rigging. No. 6, Lieutenant Wadsworth, had her latine-yard shot away. The killed and wounded amounted to 18 men.

At 8 o'clock in the evening, the *John Adams* 28, Captain Chauncey, from America, came within hail of the *Constitution*, and reported herself. By this ship, Commodore Preble received despatches informing him of the equipment of the vessels that were to come out under Commodore Barron, and of the necessity, which was thought to exist, of superseding him in the command. Captain Chauncey also stated the probability of the speedy arrival of the expected ships, which were to sail shortly after his own departure. As the *John Adams* had brought stores for the squadron, and had put most of her gun-carriages in the other frigates to enable her to do so, she could be of no immediate use; and the rest of the vessels being so soon expected, Commodore Preble was induced to delay the other attacks he had meditated, on the ground of prudence.

* Mr. Edmund P. Kennedy, one of the gunner's crew belonging to the *Siren*, was the captain of the gun, on board No. 8, when she blew up. Mr. Kennedy was a young gentleman of Maryland, who had quitted school in quest of adventure, and, having been impressed into the British navy, on obtaining his discharge in the Mediterranean, he entered under the flag of his country. In consequence of his good conduct on this occasion, and from a desire to place him in a station better suited to his pretensions, Commodore Preble made Mr. Kennedy an acting midshipman. The appointment was confirmed at home, and the gentleman in question has since worn a broad pennant. It is believed that this officer and one other, have been the only two in the navy who could boast of having gone through all the gradations of the service, from forward, aft.

During the attack of the 7th, Lieutenant Commandant Somers was standing leaning against the flag-staff of No. 1, as the boat advanced to her station. He saw a shot coming directly in a line with his head, and stooped to avoid it. The shot cut the flag-staff in two, and, after the affair, Mr. Somers stood up against the stump, when it was found that, had he not been so quick in his movements, the shot would have hit his chin.

By the John Adams, intelligence reached the squadron of the re-establishment of the rank of masters and commanders, and the new commissions were brought out to the officers before Tripoli, who had been promoted. In consequence of these changes, Lieutenant Commandant Decatur was raised to the rank of captain, and became the second in command then present; while Lieutenants Commandant Stewart, Hull, Chauncey, Smith, and Somers, became masters commandant, in the order in which they are named. Several of the young gentlemen were also promoted, including most of those who had a share in the destruction of the Philadelphia.

The bashaw now became more disposed than ever to treat, the warfare promising much annoyance, with no corresponding benefits. The cannonading did his batteries and vessels great injuries, though the town probably suffered less than might have been expected, being in a measure protected by its walls. The shells, too, that had been procured at Messina, turned out to be very bad, few exploding when they fell.* The case was different with the shot, which did their work effectually on the different batteries. Some idea may be formed of the spirit of the last attack, from the report of Commodore Preble, who stated that nine guns, one of which was used but a short time, threw 500 heavy shot, in the course of little more than two hours.

Although the delay caused by the expected arrival of the reinforcement, was improved to open a negotiation, it was without effect. The bashaw had lowered his demands quite half, but he still insisted on a ransom of \$500 a man for his prisoners, though he waived the usual claim for tribute, in future. These propositions were rejected, it being expected that, after the arrival of the reinforcement, the treaty might be made on the usual terms of civilised nations.

On the 9th of August, the *Argus*, Captain Hull, had a narrow escape. That brig having stood in towards the town, to reconnoitre with Commodore Preble on board, one of the heaviest of the shot from the batteries, raked her bottom, for some distance, and cut the plank half through. An inch or two of variation in the direction of this shot, would infallibly have sunk the brig, and that probably in a very few minutes.

No intelligence arriving from the expected vessels, Commodore Preble about the 16th, began to make his preparations for another attack, sending the *Enterprise*, Lieutenant Commandant Robinson, to Malta, with orders for the agent to forward transports with water, the vessels being on a short allowance of that great essential. On the night of the 17th, Captains Decatur and Chauncey went close in, in boats, and reconnoitred the situation of the enemy. These officers, on their return, reported that the vessels of the Tripolitan flotilla were moored abreast of each other, in a line extending from the mole to the castle, with their heads to the eastward, which was

* According to the private journal of Captain Bainbridge, then a prisoner in the town, out of forty-eight shells thrown by the two bombards in the attack of the 7th, but one exploded. Agreeably to the records made by this officer at the time, the bombs on no occasion did much injury, and the town generally suffered less by shot even than was commonly supposed.

making a defence directly across the inner harbour or galley-mole.

A gale, however, compelled the American squadron to stand off shore on the morning of the 18th, which caused another delay in the contemplated movements. While lying to, in the offing, the vessels met the transports from Malta, and the *Enterprise* returned, bringing no intelligence from the expected reinforcement.

On the 24th, the squadron stood in towards the town again, with a light breeze from the eastward. At 8 P. M., the *Constitution* anchored just out of gun-shot of the batteries, but it fell calm, and the boats of the different vessels were sent to tow the bombards to a position favourable for throwing shells. This was thought to have been effected by 2 A. M., when the two vessels began to heave their bombs, covered by the gun-boats. At daylight, they all retired, without having received a shot in return. Commodore Preble appears to have distrusted the result of this bombardment, the first attempt at night, and there is reason to think it produced but little effect.*

The weather proving very fine and the wind favourable, on the 28th, Commodore Preble determined to make a more vigorous assault on the town and batteries, than any which had preceded it, and his dispositions were taken accordingly. The gun-boats and bombards requiring so many men to manage them, the *Constitution* and the small vessels had been compelled to go into action short of hands, in the previous affairs. To obviate this difficulty, the *John Adams* had been kept before the town, and a portion of her officers and crew, and nearly all her boats, were put in requisition, on the present occasion. Captain Chauncey, himself, with about 70 of his people, went on board the flag-ship, and all the boats of the squadron were hoisted out and manned. The bombards were crippled and could not be brought into service, a circumstance that probably was of no great consequence, on account of the badness of the materials they were compelled to use.† These two vessels, with the *Scourge*, transports, and *John Adams*, were anchored well off at sea, not being available in the contemplated cannonading.

Every thing being prepared, a little after midnight the following gun-boats proceeded to their stations, viz : No. 1, Captain Somers ; No. 2, Lieutenant Gordon ; No. 3, Mr. Brooks, master of the *Argus* ; No. 4, Captain Decatur ; No. 5, Lieutenant Lawrence ; No. 6 Lieutenant Wadsworth ; No. 7, Lieutenant Crane ; and No. 9 Lieutenant Thorn. They were divided into two divisions, as before Captain Decatur having become the superior officer, however, by his recent promotion. About 3 A. M. the gun-boats advanced close to the rocks at the entrance of the harbour, covered by the *Siren*, Captain Stewart, *Argus*, Captain Hull, *Vixen*, Captain Smith, *Nautilus*, Lieutenant Reed, and *Enterprise*, Lieutenant Commandant Robin-

* Captain Bainbridge, in his private journal, says that all the shells thrown on this occasion fell short.

† It is stated that Commodore Preble subsequently discovered lead in the fuse-holes of many of the bombs. It was supposed that this had been done by treachery, by means of French agents in Sicily, the shells having been charged to resist the French invasion

son, and accompanied by all the boats of the squadron. Here they anchored, with springs on their cables, and commenced a cannonade on the enemy's shipping, castle, and town. As soon as the day dawned, the *Constitution* weighed and stood in towards the rocks, under a heavy fire from the batteries, Fort English, and the castle. At this time, the enemy's gun-boats and galleys, thirteen in number, were closely and warmly engaged with the eight American boats; and the *Constitution*, ordering the latter to retire by signal, as their ammunition was mostly consumed, delivered a heavy fire of round and grape on the former as she came up. One of the enemy's boats was soon sunk, two were run ashore to prevent them from meeting a similar fate, and the rest retreated.

The *Constitution* now continued to stand on, until she had run in within musket-shot of the mole, when she brought-to, and opened upon the town, batteries, and castle. Here she lay three quarters of an hour, pouring in a fierce fire, with great effect, until finding that all the small vessels were out of gun-shot, she hauled off. About 700 heavy shot were hove at the enemy, in this attack, besides a good many from the chase-guns of the small vessels. The enemy sustained much damage, and lost many men. The American brigs and schooners were a good deal injured aloft, as was the *Constitution*. Although the latter ship was so long within reach of grape, many of which shot struck her, she had not a man hurt! Several of her shrouds, back-stays, trusses, spring-stays, chains, lifts, and a great deal of running rigging were shot away, and yet her hull escaped with very trifling injuries. A boat belonging to the *John Adams*, under the orders of Mr. John Orde Creighton, one of that ship's master's mates, was sunk by a double-headed shot, which killed three men, and badly wounded a fourth, but the officer and the rest of the boat's crew were saved.

In this attack a heavy shot from the American gun-boats struck the castle, passed through a wall, and rebounding from the opposite side of the room, fell within six inches of Captain Bainbridge, who was in bed at the moment, and covered him with stones and mortar, from under which he was taken, considerably hurt, by his own officers. More injury was done to the town in this attack, than in either of the others, the shot appearing to have told on many of the houses.

From this time to the close of the month, preparations were making to use the bombards again, and for renewing the cannonading, another transport having arrived from Malta, without bringing any intelligence of the vessels under the orders of Commodore Barron. On the 3d of September, every thing being ready, at half past two the signal was made for the small vessels to advance. The enemy had improved the time as well as the Americans, and they had raised three of their own gun-boats that had been sunk in the affairs of the 3d and of the 28th of August. These craft were now added to the rest of their flotilla.

The Tripolitans had also changed their mode of fighting. Hitherto, with the exception of the affair of the 3d, their galleys and gun-boats had lain either behind the rocks, in positions to fire over them,

or at the openings between them, and they consequently found themselves to leeward of the frigate and small American cruisers, the latter invariably choosing easterly winds to advance with, as they would permit crippled vessels to retire. On the 3d of August, the case excepted, the Turks had been so roughly treated by being brought hand to hand, when they evidently expected nothing more than a cannonade, that they were not disposed to venture again outside of the harbour. On the 3d of September, however, the day at which we have now arrived, their plan of defence was judiciously altered. No sooner was it perceived that the American squadron was in motion, with a fresh design to annoy them, than their gun-boats and galleys got under way, and worked up to windward, until they had gained a station on the weather side of the harbour, directly under the fire of Fort English, as well as of a new battery that had been erected a little to the westward of the latter.

This disposition of the enemy's force, required a corresponding change on the part of the Americans. The bombards were directed to take stations and to commence throwing their shells, while the gun-boats, in two divisions, commanded as usual by Captains Decatur and Somers, and covered by the brigs and schooners, assailed the enemy's flotilla. This arrangement separated the battle into two distinct parts, leaving the bomb vessels very much exposed to the fire of the castle, the mole, crown, and other batteries.

The Tripolitan gun-boats and galleys stood the fire of the American flotilla until the latter had got within reach of musketry, when they retreated. The assailants now separated, some of the gun-boats following the enemy, and pouring in their fire, while the others, with the brigs and schooners, cannonaded Fort English.

In the mean while, perceiving that the bombards were suffering severely from the undisturbed fire of the guns to which they were exposed, Commodore Preble ran down in the *Constitution*, quite near the rocks, and within the bomb vessels, and brought-to. Here the frigate opened as warm a fire as probably ever came out of the broadside of a single-decked ship, and in a position where seventy heavy guns could bear upon her. The whole harbour, in the vicinity of the town, was glittering with the spray of her shot, and each battery, as usual, was silenced as soon as it drew her attention. After throwing more than three hundred round shot, besides grape and cannister, the frigate hauled off, having previously ordered the other vessels to retire from action, by signal.

The gun-boats, in this affair, were an hour and fifteen minutes engaged, in which time they threw four hundred round shot, besides grape and cannister. Lieutenant Trippe, who had so much distinguished himself, and who had received so many wounds that day month, resumed the command of No. 6, for this occasion. Lieutenant Morris, of the *Argus*, was in charge of No. 3. All the small vessels suffered, as usual, aloft, and the *Argus* sustained some damage in her hull.

The *Constitution* was so much exposed in the attack just related, that her escape can only be attributed to the weight of her own fire.

It had been found, in the previous affairs, that so long as this ship could play upon a battery, the Turks could not be kept at its guns; and it was chiefly while she was veering, or tacking, that she suffered. But, after making every allowance for the effect of her own cannonade, and for the imperfect gunnery of the enemy, it creates wonder that a single frigate could lie opposed to more than double her own number of available guns, and these too, principally, of heavier metal, while they were protected by stone walls. On this occasion, the frigate was not supported by the gun-boats at all, and she became the sole object of the enemy's aim after the bombards had withdrawn.

As might have been expected, the *Constitution* suffered more in the attack just recorded, than in any of the previous affairs, though she received nothing larger than grape in her hull. She had three shells through her canvass, one of which rendered the main-top-sail momentarily useless. Her sails, standing and running rigging were also much cut with shot. Captain Chauncey, of the *John Adams*, and a party of his officers and crew, served in the *Constitution* again on this day, and were of essential use. Indeed, in all the service which succeeded her arrival, the commander, officers, and crew of the *John Adams* were actively employed, though the ship herself could not be brought before the enemy, for the want of gun-carriages.

The bombards, having been much exposed, suffered accordingly. No. 1, was so much crippled, as to be unable to move, without being towed, and was near sinking when she was got to the anchorage. Every shroud she had was shot away. Commodore Preble expressed himself satisfied with the good conduct of every man in the squadron. All the vessels appear to have been well conducted, and efficient in their several stations. Of the effect of the shells, there is no account to be relied on, though it is probable that, as usual, many did not explode. There is no doubt, however, that the bombs were well directed, and that they fell into the town.

While Commodore Preble was thus actively employed in carrying on the war against the enemy, the attack just related having been the fifth made on the town within a month, he was meditating another species of annoyance, that about this time was nearly ready to be put in execution.

CHAPTER XXIV.

New species of annoyance to the enemy—The "Infernal"—Equipment of the ketch Intrepid—she is sent into the harbour of Tripoli—she blows up with all her crew—Probable causes of the disaster—Private journal of Capt. Bainbridge—The President, Com. Barron, rejoins the squadron—The command is transferred to Com. B.—Capture of two sail loaded with wheat—Com. Preble returns to the United States—Capt. Richard Somers—sketch of his life.

THE ketch Intrepid, that had been employed by Mr. Decatur in burning the Philadelphia, was still in the squadron, having been used of late as a transport between Tripoli and Malta. This vessel had been converted into an "infernal," or, to use more intelligible terms, she had been fitted as a floating mine, with the intention of sending her into the harbour of Tripoli, to explode among the enemy's cruisers. As every thing connected with the history of this little vessel, as well as with the enterprise in which she was now to be employed, will have interest with the public, we shall be more particular than common in giving the details of this affair, as they have reached us through public documents, and oral testimony that is deemed worthy of entire credit.

A small room or magazine had been planked up in the hold of the ketch, just forward of her principal mast. Communicating with this magazine was a trunk or tube, that led aft, to another room filled with combustibles. In the planked room, or magazine, were placed one hundred barrels of gunpowder in bulk, and on the deck immediately above the powder, were laid fifty thirteen and a half inch shells, and one hundred nine inch shells, with a large quantity of shot, pieces of kentledge, and fragments of iron of different sorts. A train was laid in the trunk, or tube, and fuses were attached in the proper manner. In addition to this arrangement, the other small room mentioned was filled with splinters and light wood, which, besides firing the train, were to keep the enemy from boarding, as the flames would be apt to induce them to apprehend an immediate explosion.

The plan was well laid. It was the intention to profit by the first dark night that offered, to carry the ketch as far as possible into the galley-mole, to light the fire in the splinter-room, and for the men employed, to make their retreat in boats.

The arrangements for carrying this project into effect appear to have been made with care and prudence. Still the duty, on every account, was deemed desperate. It was necessary, in the first place, to stand in by the western or little passage, in a dull-sailing vessel, and with a light wind, directly in the face of several batteries, the fire of which could only be escaped by the enemy's mistaking the ketch for a vessel endeavouring to force the blockade. It would also be required to pass quite near these batteries, and, as the ketch advanced, she would be running in among the gun-boats and galleys of the enemy. It is not necessary to point out the hazards of such an

exploit, as a simple cannonade directed against a small vessel filled with powder, would of itself be, in the last degree, dangerous. After every thing had succeeded to the perfect hopes of the assailants, there existed the necessity of effecting a retreat, the service being one in which no quarter could be expected.

Such a duty could be confided to none but officers and men of known coolness and courage, of perfect self-possession, and of tried spirit. Captain Somers, who had commanded one division of the gun-boats in the different attacks on the town that have been related, in a manner to excite the respect of all who witnessed his conduct, volunteered to take charge of this enterprise, and Lieutenant Wadsworth, of the *Constitution*, an officer of great merit, offered himself as the second in command. It being unnecessary to send in any more than these two gentlemen, with the few men needed to manage the ketch and row the boats, no other officer was permitted to go, though it is understood that several volunteered.

The night of the 4th September, or that of the day which succeeded the attack last related, promising to be obscure, and there being a good leading wind from the eastward, it was selected for the purpose. Commodore Preble appears to have viewed the result of this expedition with great anxiety, and to have ordered all its preparations, with the utmost personal attention to the details. This feeling is believed to have been increased by his knowledge of the character of the officers who were to go in, and who, it was understood, had expressed a determination neither to be taken, nor to permit the ammunition in the ketch to fall into the enemy's hands. The latter point was one of great importance, it being understood that the Tripolitans, like the Americans, were getting to be in want of powder.* In short, it was the general understanding in the squadron, before the ketch proceeded, that her officers had determined not to be taken. Two fast-rowing boats, one belonging to the *Constitution*, that pulled six oars, and one belonging to the *Siren*, that pulled four oars, were chosen to bring the party off, and their crews were volunteers from the *Constitution* and *Nautilus*. At the last moment, Mr. Israel, an ardent young officer, whose application to go in had been rejected, found means to get on board the ketch, and, in consideration of his gallantry, he was permitted to join the party.

When all was ready, or about 8 o'clock in the evening of the day just mentioned, the *Intrepid* was under way, with the *Argus*, *Vixen*, and *Nautilus* in company. Shortly after, the *Siren* also weighed, by a special order from the commodore, and stood in towards the western passage, or that by which the ketch was to enter, where she remained to look out for the boats.

The *Nautilus*, Captain Somers' own vessel, accompanied the ketch close in, but, on reaching a position where there was danger of her

*A day or two before the ketch was ready, the commodore himself was trying a port-fire in the cabin of the *Constitution*, in the presence of Captain Somers, and of one or two other officers, and finding that one burned a particular time, by the watch, he remarked that he thought "it burned longer than was necessary, as the time might enable the enemy to approach and extinguish it before the train would be fired." "I ask for no port-fire at all," was the quiet answer of Captain Somers.

creating suspicions by being seen, she hauled off, to take her station, like the other small vessels, near the rocks, in order to pick up the retreating boats. The last person of the squadron who had any communication with Captain Somers, was Mr. Washington Reed, the first lieutenant of his own schooner, the *Nautilus*, who left him about 9 o'clock. At that time all was calm, collected, and in order on board the "infernial." The general uneasiness was increased by the circumstance that three gun-boats lay near the entrance; and some of the last words of the experienced Decatur, before taking leave of his friend, were to caution him against these enemies.

The sea was covered with a dense haze, though the stars were visible, and the last that may be said to have been seen of the *Intrepid*, was the shadowy forms of her canvass, as she steered slowly, but steadily, into the obscurity, where the eyes of the many anxious spectators fancied they could still trace her dim outline, most probably after it had totally disappeared. This sinking into the gloom of night, was no bad image of the impenetrable mystery that has veiled the subsequent proceedings of the gallant party on board her.

When the *Intrepid* was last seen by the naked eye, she was not a musket-shot from the mole, standing directly for the harbour. One officer on board the nearest vessel, the *Nautilus*, is said, however, to have never lost sight of her with a night-glass, but even he could distinguish no more than her dim proportions. There is a vague rumour that she touched on the rocks, but it does not appear to rest on sufficient authority to be entitled to absolute credit. To the last moment, she appears to have been advancing. About this time the batteries began to fire. Their shot are said to have been directed towards every point where an enemy might be expected, and it is not improbable that some were aimed against the ketch.

The period between the time when the *Intrepid* was last seen, and that when most of those who watched without the rocks learned her fate, was not long. This was an interval of intense, almost of breathless expectation, and it was interrupted only by the flashes and roar of the enemy's guns. Various reports exist of what those who gazed into the gloom beheld, or fancied they beheld; but one melancholy fact alone would seem to be beyond contradiction. A fierce and sudden light illuminated the panorama, a torrent of fire streamed upward, and a concussion followed that made the cruisers in the offing tremble from their trucks to their keels. This sudden blaze of light was followed by a darkness of twofold intensity, and the guns of the batteries became mute, as if annihilated. Numerous shells were seen in the air, and some of them descended on the rocks, where they were heard to fall. The fuses were burning, and a few exploded, but much the greater part were extinguished in the water. The mast, too, had risen perpendicularly, with its rigging and canvass blazing, but the descent veiled all in night.

So sudden and tremendous was the eruption, and so intense the darkness which succeeded, that it was not possible to ascertain the precise position of the ketch at the moment. In the glaring, but fleeting light, no person could say that he had noted more than the

material circumstance, that the *Intrepid* had not reached the point at which she aimed. The shells had not spread far, and those which fell on the rocks were so many proofs of this important truth. There was no other fact to indicate the precise spot where the ketch exploded. A few cries arose from the town, but the subsequent and deep silence that followed was more eloquent than any clamour. The whole of Tripoli was like a city of tombs.

If every eye had been watchful previously to the explosion, every eye now became doubly vigilant to discover the retreating boats. Men got over the sides of the vessels, holding lights, and placing their ears near the water, in the hope of detecting the sounds of even muffled oars; and often was it fancied that the gallant adventurers were near. They never re-appeared. Hour after hour went by, until hope itself became exhausted. Occasionally, a rocket gleamed in the darkness, or a sullen gun was heard from the frigate, as signals to the boats; but the eyes that should have seen the first, were sightless, and the last tolled on the ears of the dead.

The three vessels assigned to that service hovered around the harbour until the sun rose, but few traces of the *Intrepid*, and nothing of her devoted crew could be discovered. The wreck of the mast lay on the rocks near the western entrance, and here and there a fragment was visible nigh it. One of the largest of the enemy's gun-boats was missing, and it was observed that two others, which appeared to be shattered, were being hauled upon the shore. The three that had lain across the entrance had disappeared. It was erroneously thought that the castle had sustained some injury from the concussion, though, on the whole, the Americans were left with the melancholy certainty of having met with a serious loss, without obtaining a commensurate advantage.

It is now known that the bottom of the ketch grounded on the north side of the rocks, near the round battery at the end of the mole, and as the wind was at the eastward, this renders it certain that the explosion took place in the western entrance to the harbour, and fully a quarter of a mile from the spot that it was intended the ketch should reach. In the wreck were found two mangled bodies, and four more were picked up on the 6th, floating in the harbour, or lodged on the shore. These bodies were in the most shocking state of mutilation, and, though Captain Bainbridge and one or two of his companions were taken to see them, it was found impossible to distinguish even the officers from the men. It is understood that six more bodies were found, the day after the explosion, on the shore to the southward of the town, and that a six-oared boat, with one body in it, had drifted on the beach to the westward.*

These statements account for all those who went in the ketch, and furnish conjectural clues to facts that would otherwise be veiled in impenetrable mystery. The spot where the boat was found, was a proof that the ketch had not got very far into the passage, or the cutter could not have drifted clear of the natural mole to the west-

*Captain Bainbridge's private journal.

ward. The reason that the boat and the ketch's bottom were not found near the same spot, was probably because the first was acted on more by the wind, and the last by the current; and the fact that a boat may have drifted through rocks, with which the shore is every where more or less lined, that would have brought up the wreck.

As there was but one body found in the boat, we are left to suppose it was that of the keeper. Of the four-oared boat, or that which belonged to the Siren, there does not appear to have been any tidings, and it was either destroyed by the explosion, sunk by the fall of fragments, or privately appropriated to himself by some Tripolitan.

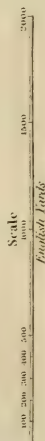
From the fact of there being but a single man in the Constitution's cutter, there is reason to infer that most of the officers and men were on board the ketch, herself, when she blew up. No person is understood to say that any of the enemy's vessels were seen near the ketch, when she exploded, and with these meagre premises, we are left to draw our inferences as to the causes of the disaster.

That Captain Somers was as capable of sacrificing himself, when there was an occasion for it, as any man who ever lived, is probably as true as it is certain that he would not destroy himself, and much less others, without sufficient reason. It has been supposed that the ketch was boarded by the enemy, and that her resolute commander fired the train in preference to being taken. The spirit created by the chivalrous exploits of Decatur, and the high-toned discipline and daring of Preble, had communicated to all under their orders, as lofty sentiments of duty and zeal as probably were ever found among an equal body of generous and ardent young men; but it is not easy to discover a motive why the explosion should have been an intentional act of the Americans, and it is easy to discover many why it should not.

There would be but one sufficient justification for an officer's sacrificing himself or his people under such circumstances, and that was the impossibility of preventing the ketch from falling into the hands of the enemy, by any other means. Neither the evidence of eye-witnesses, so far as it is available, nor the accounts of the Tripolitans themselves, would appear to show, that when the Intrepid exploded, any enemy was near enough to render so desperate a step necessary. According to the private journal of Captain Bainbridge, neither the town nor the Turks suffered materially, and he was carried to the beach to see the dead bodies, on the 8th, or two days after the affair. This alone would prove that the ketch did not reach the mole. If the object were merely to destroy the powder, the men would have been previously ordered into the boats, and, even under circumstances that rendered a resort to the fuse inexpedient, the train would have been used. That only one man was in the largest boat, is known from the condition in which she was found, and this could hardly have happened, under any circumstances, had the magazine been fired intentionally, by means of the train. Every contingency had, doubtless, been foreseen. One man was as able as twenty to apply the match, and we can see but one state of things, besides being boarded by surprise, that would render it likely that the match



THE HARBOUR OF TRIPOLI.



Full Ground

The Harbours Rocks

Middle Bank

French Fort

New Fort

Spanish Fort

La Zouk

Landing Place

B

THE CITY OF

TRIPOLI

Armed

Bashaws Castle

*Palace of
Al-Hakim*

Marine Place

*English consuls
residence*

English Fort

French Fort

A. Supposed position of the Intrepid when she exploded
B. Position of the Philadelphia

would have been used until the people were in their boats, or that it would have been applied at any other spot, than at the end of a train, or aft. A surprise of the nature mentioned, would seem to have been impossible, for, though the night was misty, objects might still be seen at some little distance, and it is probable, also, that the party had glasses.

From weighing these circumstances, it is the most rational opinion that the *Intrepid* was not intentionally blown up. She was under fire at the time, and though it is improbable that the enemy had any shot heated to repel an attack so unexpected, a cold shot might easily have fired a magazine in the situation of that of the *Intrepid*. The deck of the ketch moreover, was covered with loaded shells, and one of these might have been struck and broken. Some other unforeseen accident may have occurred. On the other hand, it is necessary to state, that Commodore Preble firmly believed that his officers blew themselves up, in preference to being made prisoners; an opinion in which it would not be difficult to coincide, were there proof that they were in any immediate danger of such a calamity. It was also the general conjecture in the squadron then before Tripoli, that such had been the fate of these bold adventurers, but it would seem to have been formed at the time, rather on an opinion of what the party that went in was capable of doing, than on any evidence of what it had actually done.

As it is the province of the historian to present all the leading facts of his subject, we shall add, on the other hand, that many little collateral circumstances appear to have occurred, which may be thought to give force to the truth of the common impression. One of the best authenticated of these, is connected with what was seen from a vessel that was watching the ketch though it was not the schooner nearest in. On board this vessel a light was observed moving on a horizontal line, as if carried swiftly along a vessel's deck by some one in hurried motion, and then to drop suddenly, like a lantern sinking beneath a hatchway. Immediately afterwards the ketch exploded, and at that precise spot, which would seem to leave no doubt that this light was on board the *Intrepid*. But even this by no means establishes the fact that the explosion was intentional. The splinters, that were to keep the enemy aloof, had not been lighted, and this movement with the lantern may have been intended to fire them, and may have had some accidental connexion with the explosion.

In addition to this appearance of the light, which rests on testimony every way entitled to respect, there was a report brought off by the prisoners, then in Tripoli, when liberated, from which another supposition has been formed as to the fate of this devoted vessel, that is not without plausibility. It was said that most of the bodies found had received gun-shot wounds, especially from grape. One body, in particular, was described as having had the small remains of nankeen pantaloons on it, and it was also reported that the hair* was of a deep black. Through this person, according to the report, no less

* It is possible certainly that this mark may have been observed, but it is more probable that the hair would have been consumed. Still a hat may have saved it.

than three grape-shot had passed. This has been supposed to have been the body of Captain Somers himself, who was the only one of the party that wore nankeen, and whose hair was of a deep black. On the supposition that the proofs of the grape-shot wounds actually existed, it has been conjectured that, as the ketch advanced, she was fired into with grape, most of her people shot down, and that the magazine was touched off by the two whose bodies were found in the wreck, and who were probably below when the *Intrepid* exploded.

That a close fire was opened when the ketch appeared, is beyond doubt, and that she was quite near the mole and crown batteries when the explosion occurred, is known, not only by means of the glass, but by the parts of the wreck that fell on the rocks. Indeed, the situation of the latter would give reason to suppose there might be some truth in the rumour that she had grounded, in which case her destruction by means of shot would have been rendered certain.

The prevalent opinion that the *Intrepid* was boarded by one or more of the gun-boats that lay near the entrance, would seem to have been entertained without sufficient proof. These vessels lay some distance within the spot where the ketch blew up, and it was not probable that they would have advanced to meet a vessel entering the harbour; for did they suppose her a friend, there would have been no motive, and did they suppose her an enemy, they would have been much more likely to avoid her. So shy, indeed, had the Tripolitans become, after the burning of the *Philadelphia*, and the boarding of their boats, that it was found extremely difficult to get their small vessels within the range of musket-balls. Captain Somers was known to have felt no apprehensions of being boarded by these three boats, for, when cautioned by his friend Decatur on that head his answer was, "they will be more likely to cut and run." In this opinion that cool and observant officer was probably right. Had there been any vessel near the *Intrepid* when she blew up, the light of the explosion would have permitted her also to be seen; some portions of her wreck would have been visible next day; and her masts and sails would probably have been flying in the air, as well as those of the ketch.

But the fact that only thirteen bodies are spoken of in the private journal of Captain Bainbridge, is almost conclusive on the subject that no Tripolitan vessel was blown up on this occasion. This entry was made at the time, and before the nature of the expedition, or the number of those who had been sent in the ketch, was known to the Americans in Tripoli. The thirteen bodies account exactly for all on board, and as they came ashore in a most mutilated state, without clothes, in some instances without legs, arms, or heads, it was impossible to say whether they were the mangled remains of friends, or enemies. Had a Tripolitan blown up in company, there must have been many more bodies in the same state, instead of the precise number mentioned, and Captain Bainbridge would have been as likely to be taken to see a dead Turk, as to see a dead American.

The missing gun-boat of which Commodore Preble speaks in his report, may have been sunk by a falling shell; she may have been

shattered and hauled into the galley-mole, out of sight ; or, she may have removed in the darkness, and been confounded next morning with others of the flotilla. Observations made, by means of glasses, in a crowded port, at a distance of two or three miles, are liable to many errors. In short, it would seem to be the better opinion, that, from some untoward circumstance, the *Intrepid* exploded at a point where she did little or no injury to the enemy.*

One of three things seems to be highly probable, concerning this long-disputed point. The ketch has either exploded by means of the enemy's shot, than which, nothing was easier in the situation where she lay ; the men have accidentally fired the magazine, while preparing to light the splinters below, or it has been done intentionally, in consequence of the desperate condition to which the party was reduced, by the destruction caused by grape. Of the three, after weighing all the circumstances, it is natural to believe that the first was the most probable, as it was certainly easier to cause a vessel like the *Intrepid*, with a hundred barrels of loose powder in her magazine, to explode by means of shot, than to cause a vessel like No. 8, which is known to have been blown up, in this manner, in the action of the 7th of August. As regards the grape-shot wounds, it will be seen that Captain Bainbridge is silent.

A sad and solemn mystery, after all our conjectures, must forever veil the fate of these fearless officers and their hardy followers. In whatever light we view the affair, they were the victims of that self-devotion which causes the seaman and soldier, to hold his life in his hand, when the honour or interest of his country demands the sacrifice. The name of Somers has passed into a battle-cry, in the American marine, while those of Wadsworth and Israel are associated with all that can ennoble intrepidity, coolness, and daring.

The war, in one sense, terminated with this scene of sublime destruction. Commodore Preble had consumed so much of his powder, in the previous attacks, that it was no longer in his power to cannonade ; and the season was fast getting to be dangerous to remain on that exposed coast. The guns, mortars, shells, &c., were taken out of the small vessels, on account of the appearance of the weather, the day after the loss of the *Intrepid*, and on the 7th, the

* The entry in the private journal of Captain Bainbridge is as follows : " Was informed that the explosion that we heard last night proceeded from a vessel (which the Americans attempted to send into the harbour,) blowing up ; which unfortunate scheme did no damage whatever to the Tripolitans ; nor did it even appear to heave them into confusion." " On the 8th, by the bashaw's permission, with Lieutenant —, went to the beach of the harbour, and there saw six persons in a most mangled and burnt condition, lying on the shore ; whom we supposed to have been part of the unfortunate crew of the fire-vessel, the bottom of which grounded on the north side of the rocks near the round battery. Two of these distressed-looking objects were fished out of the wreck. From the whole of them being so much disfigured, it was impossible to recognise any known feature to us, or even to distinguish an officer from a seaman. —, who accompanied us, informed me that he saw six others yesterday, on the shore to the southward, which were supposed to have come from the same vessel. He also informed me that an American six-oared boat, with one man in her, was found drifted on the beach to the westward."

On the subject of Commodore Preble's impressions of the fate of the *Intrepid*, it may be well to say, that the *Constitution* left Tripoli soon after the ketch was blown up, and that his letter was dated at Malta, September 18th. Owing to this circumstance, he must necessarily have been ignorant of facts that were subsequently ascertained.

John Adams, Siren, Nautilus, Enterprise, and Scourge, were directed to take the bombards and gun-boats in tow, and to proceed to Syracuse; while the Constitution, with the Argus and Vixen, in company, maintained the blockade. It is not known that another shot was fired at Tripoli.

Three days later, on the 10th of September, 1804, the President 44, wearing the broad pennant of Commodore Barron, hove in sight, with the Constellation 38, Captain Campbell, in company, when the command was regularly transferred to the former officer. On the 12th, two sail were cut off, while attempting to enter Tripoli, loaded with wheat. On the 17th, the Constitution reached Malta, with the two prizes; and subsequently, Commodore Preble went to Syracuse in the Argus. At a later day, he came home in the John Adams, where he arrived on the 26th of February, 1805. In the mean time, Captain Decatur proceeded to Malta and took command of the Constitution, which was the first frigate this celebrated officer ever had under his orders.

The country fully appreciated the services of Commodore Preble. He had united caution and daring in a way to denote the highest military qualities; and his success in general, had been in proportion. The attack of the Intrepid, the only material failure in any of his enterprises, was well arranged, and had it succeeded, it would probably have produced peace in twenty-four hours. As it was, the bashaw was well enough disposed to treat, though he seems to have entered into some calculations in the way of money, that induced him to hope the Americans would still reduce their policy to the level of his own, and prefer paying ransom, to maintaining cruisers so far from home. Commodore Preble, and all the officers and men under his orders, received the thanks of Congress, and a gold medal was bestowed on the former. By the same resolution, Congress expressed the sympathy of the nation in behalf of the relatives of Captain Richard Somers,* Lieutenants Henry Wadsworth, James Decatur, James R. Caldwell, and Joseph Israel, and Mr. John Sword Dorsey, midshipman; the officers killed off Tripoli.

* Very little is known of Captain Somers beyond his professional career. He was born in Cape May county, New Jersey, and was the son of Colonel Somers, an officer of the Revolution. He went early to sea, and had commanded a small vessel, even previously to the formation of the navy in 1798. His first cruise was in the United States, under Commodore Barry; and he appears early to have attracted attention by his seamanship, zeal, and chivalry. Decatur was his messmate, and both having been at sea previously to joining the navy, they were made lieutenants at the same time, the commission of Somers having been dated the 2d, and that of his friend on the 3d of June, 1799. The reader will better understand the tie which united the young commanders that served under Preble before Tripoli, when he finds that Stewart was the first lieutenant of the United States at this time, Somers the third, and Decatur the fourth. After the French war, Mr. Somers served in the Boston 28, Captain M'Niell, and made the singular cruise to which there has been allusion in the text. He was the officer first appointed to command the Nautilus when she was launched, and continued in that station until the time of his death.

Captain Somers was a warm-hearted friend, amiable and mild in his ordinary associations, a trained seaman, and a good officer. His loss was regretted by all who knew him, and, for a time, it cast a gloom over the little service of which he was so conspicuous and favourite a member. There existed a close intimacy between Decatur and Somers, though in many respects, their characters were unlike. In a chivalrous love of enterprise, a perfect disregard of danger, and in devotion to the honours of the flag, however

CHAPTER XXV.

Force of the American squadron under Com. Barron—A vigorous blockade kept up—Movement by land—Hamet Caramalli, brother of the Bashaw, unites with the Americans under General Eaton—Attack on Derne—Its submission—The authority of Caramalli partially acknowledged—General Eaton presses Com. Barron for reinforcements to march on Tripoli—he is denied—The decision of Com. Barron considered—He formally transfers the command to Capt. John Rodgers—The entire force under this new disposition—Peace concluded with Tripoli—Influence of the war on the fortunes and character of the navy.

THE squadron left in the Mediterranean, under the orders of Commodore Barron, after the departure of Commodore Preble, was much the strongest force that the country had then assembled in that sea. It was, indeed, the strongest force that had ever been collected under the orders of any single officer beneath the American flag; and small as it was, in efficiency it was probably more than equal to all the active vessels employed at any one period of the war of the Revolution. Keeping this fact in view, we look back with surprise, at what might then be deemed the greatest effort of a country, that possessed 1,000,000 tons of shipping in its mercantile marine, and which, with diminished duties, derived an income of \$11,098,565, from its imports alone. The force in question, consisted of the following vessels, viz:

President	44,	Capt. Cox; Com. Barron.
Constitution	44,	" Decatur.
Congress	38,	" Rodgers.
Constellation	38,	" Campbell.
Essex	32,	" J. Barron.
Siren	16,	" Stewart.
Argus	16,	" Hull.
Vixen	12,	" Smith.
Enterprise	12,	Lieut. Com. Robinson.
Nautilus	12,	" " Dent.

The Scourge 14, went home about this time, and was sold out of service, and the bombards and gun-boats borrowed from Naples, as a matter of course, were returned to that government. The Americans, however, retained the two prizes taken from the Tripolitans. The John Adams 28, Captain Chauncey, also returned to the station shortly after landing Commodore Preble in New York; and two vessels were purchased, one at Trieste, and the other at Malta, to be

they had but one heart; and a generous emulation urged both to renewed exertions, in the peculiar stations in which they had been placed by their commander.

While serving on the Mediterranean station, Mr. Somers, accompanied by two other officers, was walking in the dusk of the evening, a short distance from Syracuse, when five Sicilian soldiers made an assault on them with drawn swords, the intention being to rob. There was one dirk among the Americans, and no other arms. The officer who had this weapon, soon disposed of his assailant, but Mr. Somers was compelled to seize the sword of the soldier who attacked him, and to close. In doing so he was badly wounded in the hand, but he succeeded in disarming the assassin, plunged the weapon into his body, when the other three Sicilians fled. The two dead bodies were carried into town and recognised, but their comrades were never discovered.

converted into bombards. They were never used in that capacity, however, two arriving from America before the season for action had returned. The vessel purchased at Malta was converted into a sloop, armed and manned, and put under the command of Lieutenant Evans. She was called the *Hornet*.

The long delay in the appearance of the reinforcement, appears to have been owing to some of those intrigues among the Barbary powers, which it has been found has always induced them to co-operate in this, if in no other manner, whenever there was a war with the Christians. Commodore Barron was met at the Straits by rumours of the bad disposition of the Emperor of Morocco, and he found it necessary to employ part of his force in that quarter in order to overawe the Moors. When he went aloft, the *Essex* was left below, and a cruiser or two appears to have been kept constantly on the lower station throughout the winter.

The blockade of Tripoli was maintained by different vessels during the bad season of 1804-5; but no attack was attempted, although preparations were made to renew the war in the spring. One of the first measures of Commodore Preble, on reaching America, was to urge upon the government the necessity of building suitable bomb-ketches, and a few gun-boats fitted to cannonade a place like Tripoli. His advice was followed, the vessels being immediately laid down, but it being found impossible to have the ketches ready in time, the two vessels before mentioned, were purchased, strengthened, and equipped as bombards.

In November, Captain Rodgers, as the senior officer was put in command of the *Constitution*, while Captain Decatur was transferred to the Congress. The winter and spring passed in this manner, the blockade being maintained with vigour, most of the time, though no event worthy of note occurred off the port. While matters remained in this state with the ships, a movement by land, was in the course of execution, that must now be recorded, as it is intimately connected with the history of the war.

It has been said already, that Jussuf Caramalli, the reigning pacha, or bashaw of Tripoli, was a usurper, having deposed his elder brother Hamet, in order to obtain the throne. The latter had escaped from the regency, and after passing a wandering life, he had taken refuge among the Mamelukes of Egypt. It had often been suggested to the American agents, that the deposed prince might be made useful in carrying on the war against the usurper, and at different times, several projects had been entertained to that effect, though never with any results. At length, Mr. Eaton, the consul at Tunis, who had been a captain in the army, interested himself in the enterprise; and coming to America, he so far prevailed on the government to lend itself to his views, as to obtain a species of indirect support. Commodore Barron was directed to co-operate with Mr. Eaton, as far as he might deem it discreet.

When the new squadron arrived out, it was accordingly ascertained where the ex-bashaw was to be found, and Mr. Eaton at once commenced his operations. Two or three days after Commodore

Barron had assumed the command before Tripoli, he sent the *Argus* 16, Captain Hull, with that gentleman to Alexandria, where he arrived on the 26th of November. On the 29th, Mr. Eaton, accompanied by Lieutenant O'Bannon, of the marines, and Messrs. Mann and Danielson, two midshipmen of the squadron, proceeded to Rosetta, and thence to Cairo. The viceroy of Egypt received them with favour, and permission was obtained for the prince of Tripoli to pass out of the country unmolested, though he had been fighting against the government, with the discontented Mamelukes.

As soon as Hamet Caramalli received the proposals of Mr. Eaton, he separated himself from the Mamelukes, attended by about forty followers, and repaired to a point twelve leagues to the westward of the old port of Alexandria. Here he was soon joined by Mr. Eaton, at the head of a small troop of adventurers, whom he had obtained in Egypt. This party was composed of all nations, though Mr. Eaton expressed his belief, at the time, that had he possessed the means of subsistence, he might have marched a body of 30,000 men against Tripoli, the reigning bashaw having forced so many of his subjects into banishment. Soon after the junction agreed upon, Mr. Eaton, who now assumed the title of general, marched in the direction of Derne, taking the route across the Desert of Barca. This was early in 1805.

The *Argus* had returned to Malta for orders and stores, and on the 2d of April, she re-appeared off Bomba, with the *Hornet* 10, Lieutenant Commandant Evans, in company. Cruising on this coast a few days, without obtaining any intelligence of General Eaton and the bashaw, Captain Hull steered to the westward, and, a few leagues to the eastward of Derne, he fell in with the *Nautilus*, Lieutenant Commandant Dent. On communicating with this vessel, which was lying close in with the shore, Captain Hull ascertained that the expedition was on the coast, and that it waited only for the arms and supplies that had been brought to attack Derne, from which town it was but a league distant. A field-piece was landed, together with some stores and muskets, and a few marines appear to have been put under the orders of Mr. O'Bannon, of the corps, when the vessels took their stations to aid in the attack.

It was 2, P. M., on the 27th of April, 1805, that this assault, so novel for Americans to be engaged in, in the other hemisphere, was commenced. The *Hornet*, Lieutenant Commandant Evans, having run close in, and anchored with springs on her cables, within pistol-shot of a battery of eight guns, opened her fire. The *Nautilus* lay at a little distance to the eastward, and the *Argus* still further in the same direction, the two latter firing on the town and battery. In about an hour, the enemy were driven from the work, when all the vessels directed their guns at the beach, to clear the way for the advance of the party on shore. The enemy made an irregular but spirited defence, keeping up a heavy fire of musketry, as the assailants advanced, from behind houses and walls. At half-past 3, however, Lieutenant O'Bannon and Mr. Mann stormed the principal work, hauling down the Tripolitan ensign, and, for the first time in the

history of the country, hoisting that of the republic on a fortress of the old world. The enemy were driven out of this work with so much precipitation, that they left its guns loaded, and even primed. The cannon were immediately turned upon the town, and Hamet Caramalli having made a lodgment on the other side, so as to bring the enemy between two fires, the place submitted. At 4 o'clock, the boats of the vessels landed with ammunition for the guns and to bring off the wounded, Derne being completely in possession of the assailants.

In this affair, only 14 of the assailants were killed and wounded, General Eaton being among the latter. The attack was made by about 1200 men, while the place was supposed to be defended by three or four thousand. One or two attempts were made by the Tripolitans, to regain possession, but they were easily repulsed, and on one occasion, with some loss. The deposed bashaw remained in possession of the town, and his authority was partially recognised in the province. General Eaton now earnestly pressed Commodore Barron for further supplies and reinforcements, with a view to march on Tripoli; but they were denied, on the ground that Hamet Caramalli was in possession of the second province of the regency, and if he had the influence that he pretended to, he ought to be able to effect his object by means of the ordinary co-operation of the squadron.

This decision of Commodore Barron was the subject of much political and military criticism at the time, that officer having been censured for not sustaining a successful partisan, who certainly promised to terminate the war in a manner much beyond the most sanguine hopes of the country. It is not easy to decide on the merits or demerits of measures of this nature, without being in possession of all the distinctive facts that must govern every enterprise, and it is proper to abstain from venturing an opinion, that might not be entertained at all, when intimately acquainted with circumstances. The nature of the fighting at Derne shows that little had as yet been overcome, and, as the force of the reigning bashaw was known to be not less than 20,000 men, in some measure inured to war, it would have been the height of imprudence to have advanced against the capital, at the head of the insignificant and ill-organised force that was collected at Derne. On the other hand, did it appear, that, by merely supplying arms and ammunition; with hospital stores and other military supplies, a column of force could have been marched in front of Tripoli, with reasonable hopes of obtaining a support from the population, there would have been an error in judgment in denying the request. Whatever may have been the true character of the decision taken, however, Commodore Barron would seem to have had but little concern with it, as that excellent officer and highly respectable gentleman was in extremely ill health at the time, with but faint hopes of recovery, and on the 22d of May, he formally transferred the command of the squadron in the Mediterranean, as well as of the vessels expected, to Captain John Rodgers, the officer

next in rank to himself. The entire force under this new disposition, when the vessels known to be about to sail should arrive, would be as follows :

	Constitution	44,	Com. Rodgers.	
	President	44,	Capt. Cox.	
	Constellation	38,	" Campbell.	
	Congress	38,	" Decatur.	
	Essex	32,	" J. Barron.	
	John Adams	28,	" Chauncey.	
	Siren	16,	" Stewart.	
	Argus	16,	" Hull.	
	Vixen	12,	" Smith.	
	Nautilus	12,	Lieut. Com. Dent.	
	Enterprise	12,	" " Robinson.	
	Hornet	12,	" " Evans.	
Bombs.	{	Vengeance	" Lewis.	
		Spitfire	" M'Niell.	
	{	No. 2	1 gun,	" Izard.
		3	2 "	" Maxwell.
4		2 "	" J. D. Henley.	
5		2 "	" Harrison.	
6		2 "	" Lawrence.	
8		2 "	" Harraden.	
9		2 "	" Elbert.	
10		2 "	" Carter.	
Gun-boats.	{	11	1 "	"
		12	1 "	"

The bombards mentioned in the foregoing list, were the two vessels purchased in America and fitted for the purpose ; and gun-boats Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10, were large of their class, having been regularly and carefully constructed at home. They were long, low, narrow vessels, principally sloop-rigged, and most of them mounted two heavy thirty-two-pounders, one at each end. As they were ready to sail in the mild season, it was thought by putting their guns below, they might be carried across the Atlantic, although their gun-wales, when the vessels were ready for service, were scarcely two feet from the water. They sailed at different times, and all arrived safely but one. No. 7, Lieutenant Ogilvie, sailed May 14, 1805, but springing her mast, she returned to New York to refit. She sailed a second time, June the 20th, and was never heard of afterwards. No. 7 made the fourth American cruiser that had thus disappeared within thirty years.* It is worthy of remark, that the remaining eight boats arrived at Syracuse within forty-eight hours of each other. Lieutenant James Lawrence took No. 6 to the Mediterranean, arriving safely. When near the Western Islands, he fell in with the British frigate *Lapwing* 28, Captain Upton, which ran for him, under the impression that the gun-boat was some wrecked mariners on

*Saratoga 16, *l'Insurgente* 36, *Pickering* 14, and No. 7.

a raft, there being a great show of canvass, and apparently no hull. On the 12th of June, No. 6 fell in with the fleet of Admiral Collingwood, off Cadiz, and while Mr. Lawrence was on board one of the British ships, a boat was sent and took three men out of No. 6, under the pretence that they were Englishmen. On his return to his own vessel, Mr. Lawrence hauled down his ensign, but no notice was taken of the proceeding by the British. It is a fitting commentary on this transaction, that, in the published letters of Lord Collingwood, where he speaks of the impressment of Americans, he says that England would not submit to such an aggression for an hour! Shortly after assuming the command, Commodore Rodgers transferred Captain J. Barron from the *Essex* 32, to the *President* 44, giving the former ship to Captain Cox, who was only a master and commander.

Negotiations for peace now commenced in earnest, Mr. Lear having arrived off Tripoli, for that purpose, in the *Essex*, Captain Barron. After the usual intrigues, delays, and prevarications, a treaty was signed on the 3d of June, 1805. By this treaty, no tribute was to be paid in future, but \$60,000 were given by America, for the ransom of the remaining prisoners, after exchanging the Tripolitans in her power, man for man.

It is not easy to express approbation of the terms of this peace. America had been contending for the usages of civilisation, and the rights of nations, and the ransom was a direct abandonment of both. When we remember the force that was about to assemble before Tripoli, the season of the year, the fact that Derne was occupied by Hamet Caramalli, and the disposition that so generally prevailed in the squadron to renew the attacks on the enemy, we find it difficult to believe that better terms might not have been obtained. How far the course of the negotiator was compelled by his instructions, we have no means of saying, but the treaty was approved and ratified. While many condemned it as unwise, all, however, rejoiced that it was the means of restoring so many brave men to their country. It is no more than liberal, moreover, to believe that the situation of these unfortunate officers and men, had a deep influence in inducing the government to forego abstract considerations, with a view to their relief.

Thus terminated the war with Tripoli, after an existence of four years. It is probable that the United States would have retained in service some officers, and would have kept up a small force, had not this contest occurred, but its influence on the fortunes and character of the navy is incalculable. It saved the first, in a degree at least, and it may be said to have formed the last. Perhaps no service, either in the way of ships or officers, ever had so large a proportion of what was excellent in it, and so small a proportion of that which was defective, as the navy of the United States, the day peace was signed with Tripoli. A stern discipline, a high moral tone, rare models in seamanship, active warfare, the means of comparison, and a spirit of emulation that is certain to carry the national character to the highest level, whenever the national energies can be permitted to

exhibit themselves, had conspired to produce this end. The petulant and always questionable proofs of private rencontres, which are so apt to sully the renown of infant services, had disappeared in a chivalry that seemed to have forgotten all but the country and her honour. Not a duel was fought during the command of Preble; the brave men assembled under his orders, regarded each other as brothers, and the honour of one appeared to be connected with the honour of all. An admirable *esprit de corps* was created, and the button, which bore the emblem of the common profession, was deemed a signal of the presence of a friend. Men had stood by each other in moments of severe trial, and even the body of the nation, which is so little addicted to the sentimental, or the abstract, began to regard the flag with open pride. In a word, the tone, discipline, pride, emulation, and spirit, that the navy derived from this remote and, in one sense, unimportant war, prepared it for another and a severer trial that was at hand. The impression produced in the Mediterranean was also favourable, and the head of the Romish church is said to have publicly declared, that America had done more for christendom, against the barbarians, than all the powers of Europe united.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

Agreement between Captain John Paul Jones and the Officers of the Squadron.

[Translation.]

AGREEMENT between Messrs. John Paul Jones, Captain of the *Bon Homme Richard*; Pierre Landais, Captain of the *Alliance*; Dennis Nicolas Cottineau, Captain of the *Pallas*; Joseph Varage, Captain of the *Stag* (*le Cerf*); and Philip Nicolas Ricot, Captain of the *Vengeance*; composing a squadron, that shall be commanded by the oldest officer of the highest grade, and so on in succession, in case of death or retreat. None of the said commanders, whilst they are not separated from the said squadron, by order of the minister, shall act but by virtue of the brevet which they shall have obtained from the United States of America; and it is agreed that the flag of the United States shall be displayed.

The division of prizes to the superior officers and crews of said squadron, shall be made agreeably to the American laws; but it is agreed, that the proportion of the whole, coming to each vessel of the squadron, shall be regulated by the minister of the marine department of France, and the minister plenipotentiary of the United States of America.

A copy of the American laws shall be annexed to the present agreement, after having been certified by the commander of the *Bon Homme Richard*; but as the said laws cannot foresee nor determine as to what may concern the vessels and subjects of other nations, it is expressly agreed, that whatever may be contrary to them shall be regulated by the minister of the French marine, and the minister of the United States of America.

It is likewise agreed, that the orders given by the minister of the French marine, and the minister plenipotentiary of the United States, shall be executed.

Considering the necessity there is for preserving the interests of each individual, the prizes that shall be taken shall be remitted to the orders of Monsieur le Ray de Chaumont, Honorary Intendant of the Royal Hotel of Invalids, who has furnished the expenses of the armament of said squadron.

It is agreed, that M. le Ray de Chaumont be requested not to give up the part of the prizes coming to all the crews, and to each individual of the said squadron, but to their order, and to be responsible for the same in his own proper name.

Whereas the said squadron has been formed for the purpose of injuring the common enemies of France and America, it has been agreed that such armed vessels, whether French or American, may be associated therewith, as by common consent shall be found suitable for the purpose, and that they shall have such proportion of the prizes which shall be taken, as the laws of their respective countries allow.

In case of the death of any one of the before mentioned commanders of vessels, he shall be replaced agreeably to the order of the tariff, with liberty, however, to choose whether he will remain in his own ship, or give up to the next in order the command of the vacant ship.

It has moreover been agreed, that the commander of the Stag (le Cerf) shall be excepted from the last article of this present agreement, because, in case of a disaster to M. de Varage, he shall be replaced by his second in command, and so on by the other officers of his cutter, the Stag (le Cerf).

J. P. JONES,
P. LANDAIS,
DE COTTINEAU,
VARAGE,
P. RICOT,
LE RAY DE CHAUMONT.

(Spark's Diplomatic Correspondence, page 205, vol. iii.)

NOTE B.

IN consequence of the infancy of the arts in America, both the soldiers and seamen have had to contend with their enemies, in the wars that are passed, under the disadvantages of possessing inferior arms, powder, and even shot. How far these deficiencies in the guns and shot may have been felt in the Revolution, it is not easy to say, as a large portion of the military supplies were obtained either from the enemy himself, or from Europe. After the Revolution, however, down to the close of the last war with England, the navy in particular laboured under great disadvantages on account of defective armaments and stores. In many of the actions, more men were injured by the bursting of guns than by the fire of the enemy, and the shot, from improper casting, frequently broke when they struck. Another consequence of this defective casting was a diminution in weight, and consequently, in momentum. The latter fact having been alluded to, in the course of the war, the writer, with a view to this work, personally weighed a quantity of shot, both English and American,

and made a note of the results. It was found that the old shot, or those with which the ships were supplied at the commencement of the war of 1812, were comparatively lighter than those which had been cast at a later day; but in no instance was an American shot even then found of full weight. On the other hand, the English shot were uniformly of accurate weight. Some of the American 32 pound shot, weighed but 30 pounds; and a gentleman present on the occasion, assured the writer that, a few years earlier, he had met with many which did not much exceed 29 pounds. The heaviest weighed was 31 pounds 3 ounces. An average of four, all of which were of the later castings, gave 30 pounds 1¹ ounces. The average of the 18 pound shot was about 17 pounds; but, it was understood, as this examination occurred several years after the peace, that the shot, as well as the guns, were then materially better than they had been previously to and during the war.

The reader will bear in mind that twelve French pounds make nearly thirteen English. Thus, while the gun-deck batteries of l'Insurgente were nominally twelves, the shot weighed about 13 pounds. On the other hand, the gun-deck batteries of the Constellation were nominally twenty-fours, but the shot probably weighed about 22 pounds.

In the action with la Vengeance, the two ships had the same nominal weight of metal on their gun-decks, viz. eighteen pounders. But the eighteen-pound shot of the Vengeance must have weighed nearly 19½ English pounds, while those of the Constellation did not probably weigh 17 pounds, if indeed they weighed more than 16 pounds.

It has been asserted that the English shot were over-weight, but the writer weighed a good many himself, and he found them all surprisingly accurate.

NOTE C.

List of the Officers of the Navy, before the Peace Establishment Law of 1801 was passed.

CAPTAINS.

John Barry,	Samuel Barron,
Samuel Nicholson,	Moses Brown,
Silas Talbot,	Moses Tryon,
Richard Dale,	Richard Derby,
Thomas Truxtun,	George Little,
James Sever,	John Rodgers,
Stephen Decatur,	Edward Preble,
Christopher R. Perry,	John Mullett,
Richard V. Morris,	James Barron,
Alexander Murray,	Thomas Baker,
Daniel M'Niell,	Henry Geddes,
Thomas Tingey,	Thomas Robinson,

Patrick Fletcher,
George Cross,

William Bainbridge,
Hugh G. Campbell.

MASTERS COMMANDANT.

Cyrus Talbot,
David Jewett,
William Cowper,
Richard Law, Jr.

Charles C. Russell,
Benjamin Hillar,
John A. Spotswood.

List of Officers retained on the Peace Establishment.

We have set opposite to every name, the ultimate station each individual attained as far as can be ascertained, and as a means of showing the average fortunes of those who have been engaged in the hardy service of the sea.

CAPTAINS.

John Barry,	-	died at the head of the navy, in 1803.
Samuel Nicholson,	-	do. do. do. in 1811.
Richard Dale,	-	resigned in 1802.
Thomas Truxtun,	-	do. in 1802.
Richard V. Morris,	-	dismissed without trial, 1804.
Alexander Murray,	-	died at the head of the service, in 1821.
Samuel Barron,	-	died 1810.
John Rodgers,	-	died at the head of the service, in 1838.
Edward Preble,	-	died in 1807.
James Barron,	-	died at the head of the service, in 1851.
William Bainbridge,	-	died in 1833.
Hugh G. Campbell,	-	died in 1820.

LIEUTENANTS.

Charles Stewart,	-	At the head of the service, 1853.
Isaac Hull,	-	died a captain, 1843.
Andrew Sterrett,	-	resigned, a master commandant, in 1805.
John Shaw,	-	died a captain, in 1823.
John M'Rea,	-	resigned 1803.
Isaac Chauncey,	-	died a captain, 1840.
Robert W. Hamilton,	-	resigned 1802.
John Ballard,	-	resigned 1801.
John Rush,	-	resigned 1802.
John Smith,	-	died a captain, in 1815.
Freeborn Banning,	-	resigned 1802.
Richard Somers,	-	killed in battle, a master com., in 1804.
Stephen Decatur,	-	killed in a duel, a captain, in 1820.
George Cox,	-	resigned, a master com., in 1808.
John H. Dent,	-	died, a captain, in 1823.
Thomas Robinson, Jr.	-	resigned, a master com., in 1809.
John Cowper,	-	resigned in 1801.
John T. R. Cox,	-	resigned in 1804.

William C. Jenks,	-	dismissed in 1804.
David Porter,	-	resigned, a captain, in 1826.
John Cassin,	-	died, a captain, in 1822.
Samuel Evans,	-	died, a captain, in 1824.
George G. Lee,	-	resigned in 1805.
Charles Gordon,	-	died, a captain, in 1817.
Richard H. L. Lawson,	-	resigned in 1804.
Godfrey Wood,	-	resigned in 1802.
Edward Wyer,	-	resigned in 1805.
Geo. W. Tew,	-	died on the Mediterranean station, 1803.
Henry Vandyke,	-	killed in a duel, in 1803.
John M. Claggett,	-	lost in the Bay of Gibraltar, 1801.
Phil. C. Wederstrandt,	-	resigned, a master com., 1810.
Joshua Blake,	-	resigned in 1806.
Joseph Tarbell,	-	died, a captain, in 1815.
James R. Caldwell,	-	killed in battle, in 1804.
Lewis C. Bailey,	-	dropped subsequently, under the re- duction law.
Jacob Jones,	-	died, a captain, in 1850.

MIDSHIPMEN.

Wm. Henry Allen,	-	killed in battle, a master com., 1814.
Samuel Angus,	-	dismissed and subsequently pensioned a captain, in 1824.
Thos. O. Anderson,	-	resigned, a lieutenant, 1807.
William Butler,	-	resigned 1807.
Joseph Bainbridge,	-	died, a captain, in 1824.
William Burrows,	-	killed in battle, a lieutenant com., in 1813.
William Blake,	-	did not join, and was dropped.
Samuel G. Blodgett,	-	drowned, a lieutenant, in 1810.
Clement Biddle,	-	resigned 1804.
James Biddle,	-	died, a captain, in 1848.
P. C. Blake,	-	resigned 1804.
Edward Bennett,	-	died, a lieutenant, in 1810.
Johnston Blakely,	-	lost at sea, a mast. com., in 1814.
Thomas T. Beall,	-	resigned 1803.
Walter Boyd,	-	dismissed in 1810.
Peter E. Bentley,	-	resigned 1802.
James Biggs,	-	resigned 1803.
E. R. Blaine,	-	resigned in 1804.
Thomas Brown,	-	died, a captain, in 1828.
Michael B. Carrol,	-	resigned, a master commandant.
George Calder,	-	resigned 1802.
Edward N. Cox,	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1809.
Aaron F. Cook,	-	permitted to retire, in 1801.
William Campbell,	-	resigned 1802.
William M. Crane,	-	died, a captain, in 1846.
Stephen Cassin,	-	fourth captain, in 1853.
J. Orde Creighton,	-	died, a captain, in 1838

H. P. Casey,	-	-	retired in 1805.
William Cutbush,	-	-	resigned 1805.
Henry J. Cobb,	-	-	resigned 1803.
J. P. D. H. Craig,	-	-	retired in 1805.
Richard Carey,	-	-	retired under peace establishment law, in 1801.
Charles Coomb,	-	-	died in 1804.
Winlock Clark,	-	-	drowned, a lieutenant, in 1810.
James Decatur,	-	-	killed in battle, a lieutenant, in 1804.
William Duncanson,	-	-	dropped from list.
John Dorsey,	-	-	killed in battle, in 1804.
Daniel S. Dexter,	-	-	died, a master and commander, 1818.
John Davis,	-	-	died, a lieutenant, in 1818.
David Deacon,	-	-	died a captain, 1841.
George Dabney,	-	-	resigned 1805.
John Downes,	-	-	third captain, 1853.
Samuel Elbert,	-	-	died, a lieutenant, in 1812.
John Gallaway,	-	-	died in 1804.
James Gibbon,	-	-	burnt in Richmond theatre, a lieutenant, in 1811.
J. M. P. Gardner,	-	-	died, a master commandant, in 1815.
Sloss H. Grinnell,	-	-	retired, a lieutenant, in 1807.
Ed. Giles,	-	-	resigned 1804.
Allen J. Green,	-	-	resigned 1803.
Jno. Goodwin, Jr.	-	-	died in 1804.
Geo. H. Geddes,	-	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1811.
Wm. Gregory,	-	-	did not accept.
Jas. S. Higginbotham,	-	-	died, a lieutenant, in 1808.
Alex. C. Harrison,	-	-	died, a lieutenant, in 1809.
Bernard Henry,	-	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1812.
George Hackley,	-	-	died in 1805.
James Haight,	-	-	resigned 1802.
Sewal Handy,	-	-	resigned 1804.
Thos. R. Hardenburgh,	-	-	did not join, and was dropped.
Philip Henop,	-	-	resigned 1801.
A. J. Hinton,	-	-	subsequently discharged under reduction law.
John D. Henley,	-	-	died, a captain, in 1835.
Seymour Hooe,	-	-	resigned 1801.
Alfred Hazard,	-	-	dismissed in 1809.
John Hartley,	-	-	resigned 1802.
J. Montresor Haswell,	-	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1810.
Theodore Hunt,	-	-	resigned, a master com., in 1811.
Daniel C. Heath,	-	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1805.
Robert Henley,	-	-	died, a captain, in 1828.
Ralph Izard,	-	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1810.
Joseph Israel,	-	-	killed in battle, in 1804.
Robert Innes,	-	-	drowned on service, in 1802.
A. K. Kearney,	-	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1808.
Charles Ludlow,	-	-	resigned, a master com., in 1813.

James T. Leonard,	-	died, a captain, in 1832.
James Lawrence,	-	killed in battle, a captain, in 1813.
William Livingston,	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1804.
A. B. Lord,	-	unknown.
Daniel M'Niell, Jr.	-	retired, a lieutenant, in 1807.
Joseph Murdock,	-	died in service.
Louis M'Lane,	-	resigned in 1802; afterwards secreta ry of state, &c.
William Miller,	-	retired in 1807.
Joseph Maxwell,	-	died, a lieutenant, in 1806.
Charles Mills,	-	resigned 1804.
Daniel Murray,	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1811.
Geo. A. Marcellin,	-	died, a lieutenant, in 1810.
Charles Morris,	-	second captain, 1853.
Charles Moore,	-	died in service early.
George Merrill,	-	died, a lieutenant, 1822.
Archibald M'Call,	-	resigned 1802.
William M'Intosh,	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1808.
George Mitchell,	-	fate unknown.
James Mackay,	-	resigned 1803.
Thomas M'Donough,	-	died, a captain, in 1825.
Humphrey Magrath,	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1809.
George Mann,	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1811.
W. R. Nicholson,	-	killed in a duel, in 1805.
Jno. B. Nicholson,	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1810.
James Nicholson,	-	resigned 1804.
William F. Nicholls,	-	resigned 1804.
William Newman,	-	resigned 1803.
Edward O'Brien,	-	retired in 1804.
Peter S. Ogilvie,	-	lost at sea, a lieutenant, in 1805.
Francis Patton,	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1806.
Daniel Polk,	-	resigned 1804.
Oliver H. Perry,	-	died at sea, a captain, in 1818.
Benj. Page,	-	resigned 1803.
Octavius A. Page,	-	died, a lieutenant, in 1813.
Henry Page,	-	resigned 1803.
Daniel T. Patterson,	-	died a captain, 1841.
George Parker,	-	died at sea, a master com., in 1814.
Stephen Proctor,	-	resigned 1803.
States Rutledge,	-	resigned 1802.
Charles G. Ridgely,	-	died, a captain, in 1848.
Heathcote J. Reed,	-	died, a lieutenant, in 1812.
George W. Reed,	-	died, a master com., in 1813.
Charles Reed,	-	resigned 1806.
Benj. F. Read,	-	died, a lieutenant com., in 1812.
Jos. Richardson,	-	resigned 1803.
John Rowe,	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1808.
James Renshaw,	-	died, a captain, in 1846.
Charles Robinson,	-	resigned 1807.
Benjamin Smith,	-	died, a lieutenant, in 1807.

Arthur Sinclair,	-	died, a captain, in 1831.
Robert Stewart,	-	drowned, a lieutenant.
William Scallen,	-	resigned 1806.
John Shattuck,	-	fate unknown, a lieutenant.
G. W. Spottswood,	-	resigned 1803.
Maurice Simons,	-	declined.
Daniel Simms,	-	resigned 1804.
John Shore,	-	resigned 1803.
H. Savage,	-	resigned 1801.
W. P. Smith,	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1808.
Sidney Smith,	-	died, a master com., in 1827.
Thomas Swartwout, Jr.	-	killed in a duel, in 1801.
Robert T. Spence,	-	died, a captain, in 1827
Simon Smith,	-	died at sea, in 1806.
W. M. Smith,	-	declined.
Richard Thomas,	-	resigned 1802.
John Trippe,	-	died, a lieutenant com., in 1810.
Rob. L. Tilghman,	-	resigned 1802.
William Thorn,	-	retired in 1805.
Edward Trenchard,	-	died, a captain, in 1824.
Jonathan Thorn,	-	blown up, a lieutenant, in 1810.
Benjamin Turner,	-	killed in a duel, a lieut., in 1807
Jacob R. Valk,	-	resigned in 1808.
Jacob Vickery,	-	declined.
Sybrant Van Schaick,	-	resigned, a lieutenant, in 1807.
A. Woodruff,	-	resigned in 1803.
Daniel Wurts,	-	resigned in 1802.
E. Willis.	-	drowned in Bay of Gibraltar, 1800.
Henry Wadsworth,	-	killed in battle, a lieut., in 1804.
John Wood,	-	resigned in 1804.
Walter Winter,	-	drowned, a lieutenant, 1813.
Lewis Warrington,	-	died, a captain, in 1851.
Charles Wilson,	-	resigned 1803.
M. T. Woolsey,	-	died, a captain, in 1838.
Wallace Wormley,	-	entered marine corps.
Samuel Woodhouse,	-	died, a captain, 1842.

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OF
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

VOL. II.

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COMMODORE
THOMAS MACDONOUGH, U.S.N.

NAVAL HISTORY

OF THE

UNITED STATES.

CHAPTER I.

Change in policy of government, as respects the Barbary powers—Com. Rodgers before Tunis—Rank of Master Commandant restored—Promotions—Commencement of gun-boat system—Equipment of the Chesapeake 38, for the Mediterranean, her departure and action with English ship Leopard 50—Trial of Com. Barron; its result and merits.

PEACE was no sooner made with Tripoli, than Commodore Rodgers gave his attention to Tunis, with which regency there was now every prospect of a speedy war. In April, while blockading, the Constitution had captured a xebeck belonging to the Bey, which, in company with two prizes, was endeavouring to get into Tripoli. These vessels had been demanded, and the consul had been notified that hostilities would immediately follow a refusal. Mr. Davis, who was then at Tunis, informed the Bey that the captured vessels could not be released, and the whole matter was referred to the naval officer in command. A correspondence ensued, and Commodore Rodgers felt himself, not only compelled, but, without forgetting prudence, able to tell the government of Tunis, that it was his settled intention to maintain the rights of his flag, and the law of nations.

When this reply was received at Tunis, the Bey, who was not yet accustomed to consider America a nation of importance, and who appeared to think that his anger must be a source of serious apprehension to her people, used the loftiest language, expressly announcing an intention to commence hostilities unless the vessels were instantly restored. But times had changed. The temporary control of events had been taken out of the hands of timid politicians at a distance, and had passed into those of men on the spot, who desired nothing better than to teach the barbarians justice. The American merchant ships had ceased to apprehend capture, and the idea, which had just before been so terrible, of a rover's getting into the Atlantic, appears to have been forgotten. In short, a very moderate application of that dormant power, which, when properly applied, can at any time give the republic a commanding influence in the

general concerns of the world, had at least disposed of all questions of this nature, that were connected with states as insignificant as those of Barbary. The Bey of Tunis, moreover, had selected a most unfortunate moment for his bravado, the force under Commodore Rodgers being at the time nearly all in the Mediterranean. The gun-boats had arrived, and the ketches were hourly expected. In short, the menace was most inopportunistically made for the Bey, since it was uttered to those who would not have regretted an attempt to put it in execution.

The business at Tripoli was no sooner completed, therefore, than Commodore Rodgers sailed with thirteen vessels, gun-boats included, and anchored in Tunis Bay on the 1st of August. As soon as the consul had repaired on board and communicated the state of things in the regency, a council of war was called. The result was a letter to the Bey, demanding to know if a declaration made to the consul, in which he had said that the appearance of the American squadron off his port would be considered as the commencement of hostilities, was to be taken literally or not. In this letter the Bey was given to understand, in the plainest manner, that hostilities would commence on the part of the Americans, within thirty-six hours, did he decline answering, or neglect the application.

It may be useful to the reader, if we pause a moment, and review the changes that four short years had produced in the tone of the American agents. In 1801, after capturing a Tripolitan rover, Commodore Dale had been compelled to send her into her own port, through the doubts and misgivings of a feeble and temporising policy at home. The administration had used the cry of economy as a means of defeating its adversaries, and, as is too often the case, this appeal had been made without a just discrimination between that liberal saving, which anticipates future waste by present expenditure, and that which can be no better described than by the homely axiom of "penny wise and pound foolish." But the force of things, always a salutary corrective of the errors of men, had compelled an armament, and no better illustration of the expediency of being prepared for war, need be required than is to be found in the facts of this case.

The Bey, accustomed to regard the Americans as tributaries, had been seeking a cause for war, when he was suddenly met by this high tone on the part of those whom he had hitherto found so much disposed to temporise. At first he appeared to place no faith in the demonstration, and the required answer was not immediately sent. Commodore Rodgers, in consequence, directed Captain Decatur to land, to demand an audience of the Bey, and to obtain an unequivocal solution of the question of peace or war.

It is probable that the Bey regarded this mission as one of a doubtful nature, also, for he refused to receive Captain Decatur in the character in which he had been sent. That spirited officer, little accustomed to temporising, declined being admitted in any other. As soon as the intentions of both parties had been explained, Captain Decatur returned on board, when "the royal breast" of the Bey "appeared to be panic struck." A letter was sent to the commo-

dore, signed by the pacha himself, in which he expressed a desire to treat, and using the most pacific language. Shortly after he announced a wish to send a minister to Washington. This moderated tone put an end to the threatened hostilities, and after a negotiation that lasted nearly a month, the affair was arranged with the regency, to the satisfaction of one of the parties at least. The xebeck and her prizes were not given up. In September, a Tunisian ambassador embarked in the Congress 38, Captain Decatur, and in due time he was landed at Washington.

Commodore Rodgers remained in Tunis Bay more than a month, literally negotiating under the muzzles of his guns, and the result proved the wisdom of the course he had taken. The navy, the ablest of all negotiators in such matters, had completely reversed the ancient order of things, for, instead of an American agent's being compelled to solicit the restoration of prizes, illegally taken, in Africa, an African agent was now soliciting the restoration of prizes legally captured in America. At a later day, the xebeck and her consorts were given up, as of no moment; but when the Tunisian minister added a demand for tribute, agreeably to former usage, he met with an explicit denial. After a short residence, he returned to his master with the latter answer, but the Bey did not see fit to take any steps in consequence. The impression made by the attacks on Tripoli, and of the appearance of the American squadron before his own town, would seem to have been lasting.

After the settlement of the dispute with Tunis, the vessels in the Mediterranean were gradually reduced, though it was still deemed necessary to keep a small squadron in that sea. The government also became better apprised of the nature of the force that was required, in carrying on a war with the Barbary states, and several new vessels were put into the water about this time, among which were two regularly constructed bombards, the Etna and the Vesuvius. Two sloops of war, of the most approved models, were also built, and became active cruisers on the peace establishment. These vessels were the Wasp 18, and the Hornet 18, the former being a ship and the latter a brig. These two beautiful and efficient sloops had no gun-decks, poops, or top-gallant forecastles, but were constructed after the designs of the French, and they had armaments of 16 thirty-two pound carronades, and 2 long twelves each.

In April, 1806, a law was passed which authorised the President to employ as many of the public vessels as he might deem necessary, but limiting the number of the officers and seamen. By this act the list of the captains was increased to thirteen, that of the masters and commanders to eight, and that of the lieutenants to seventy-two. The rank of masters and commanders was re-established in 1804, as has been already shown, and, of the thirty-six lieutenants retained in 1801, fifteen had been promoted, thirteen had resigned, one had died on service, one had been drowned on service, one had been killed in battle, one had been killed in a duel, one had been dismissed, and three still remained on the list of lieutenants. Of those

that had been promoted, one* had resigned, and one† had been killed in battle. It follows, that, in order to complete the new list to seventy-two, sixty-nine midshipmen were raised to the rank of lieutenants.

The list of captains, under the new law, and after the changes just named, consisted of the following gentlemen, viz:

1 Samuel Nicholson,	8 Hugh G. Campbell,
2 Alexander Murray,	9 Stephen Decatur,
3 Samuel Barron,	10 Thomas Tingey,
4 John Rodgers,	11 Charles Stewart,
5 Edward Preble,	12 Isaac Hull,
6 James Barron,	13 John Shaw,
7 William Bainbridge,	14 Isaac Chauncey.

The list of masters and commanders at the same period, were as follows, viz:

1 John Smith,	5 David Porter,
2 George Cox,	6 John Cassin,
3 John H. Dent,	7 Samuel Evans,
4 Thomas Robinson,	8 Charles Gordon.

The condition of the navy may be said to have been negative at the period of which we are now writing, for while all who reflected seriously on the subject, felt the necessity of greatly increasing this branch of the national defence, nothing efficient was attempted, or, apparently contemplated. Ships of the line, without which it would be impossible to prevent any of even the secondary maritime states of Europe from blockading the ports of the country, were now scarcely mentioned, and the materials that had been collected for that object, in 1800, were rapidly disappearing for the purposes of repairs and re-constructions. It is, indeed, difficult to imagine a policy as short-sighted and feeble, as that pursued by Congress at this particular juncture. With political relations that were never free from the appearances of hostilities, a trade that covered all the seas of the known world, and an experience that was replete with lessons on the necessity of repelling outrages by force, this great interest was treated with a neglect that approached fatuity. To add to this oversight, and to increase the despondency of the service, as well as of all those whose views extended to the future necessities of the country, the government appears to have adopted a policy, in connexion with the defence of the harbours, bays, and sounds of the coast, that was singularly adapted to breaking down the high tone that the navy had acquired in its recent experience. This plan, which has been generally known as the "gun-boat policy," originated as far back as the year 1803, though it did not become of sufficient moment to be particularly noticed until the time at which we are now arrived, in the regular order of events.

In February, 1803, the relations of the country with Spain, in consequence of a denial of a place of deposit at New Orleans, had an aspect so threatening, that a law was passed appropriating \$50,000

* Sterrett.

† Somers.

for the construction of gun-boats. In consequence of the acquisition of Louisiana, by treaty, however, this money was never used, although steps had been taken to procure models of the gun-boats of Spain and Naples, nations whose naval histories, for the previous century, offered but questionable examples for the imitation of a people as singularly maritime as that of America.

In 1804, gun-boats were obtained in Naples to cannonade Tripoli, the position of the rocks before that town admitting of their use under circumstances of advantage. The Neapolitan boats proving defective a few were built at home, and this species of vessel first appeared afloat in 1805. The hardy manner in which they were carried across the ocean and returned, has already been mentioned. The law under which these boats had been built, contemplated their future use, as an auxiliary means of permanent harbour defence.

Motives had been gradually accumulating, however, to induce the executive to extend this policy. The English had set up new doctrines on the subject of blockades and the colonial trade, in opposition to doctrines of France, that were equally opposed to common sense, obvious justice, and usage; and, as the former possessed a numerous and active marine, these conflicting practices resulted in a species of indirect and half-way blockade of the entire American coast. English cruisers were constantly hovering around the most frequented of the ports of the country, while privateers under French commissions, were occasionally guilty of the grossest excesses. In short, we have now reached the commencement of that extraordinary state of things, when each of the great European belligerents appeared to think that an act of aggression by its enemy on a neutral, was an ample justification for retaliating on the unoffending and suffering party.

The gun-boats, at first, were well received in the service, since it gave enterprising young officers commands; and the vessels originally constructed, were of an equipment, size and force, which in a measure, removed the objections that young sea-officers would be apt to urge against serving in them. At the close of the year 1806, the President announced to Congress that the gun-boats already authorised by a law of April of the same year, 50 in number, were so far advanced as to put it in the power of the government to employ them all, the succeeding season, and the message contained a recommendation to extend the system.

An event soon occurred that not only stimulated this policy, but which induced the government to resort to new measures to protect the country, some of which were as questionable, as they were novel. A few ships had been kept in the Mediterranean, as stated, and it is worthy of being noted, that, with a commerce that, in 1807, employed 1,200,000 tons of shipping, this was the only foreign station on which an American cruiser was ever seen! Neither was there any proper home squadron, notwithstanding the constant complaints that were made of the wrongs inflicted by English and French cruisers, particularly the former, at the very mouths of the harbours of the country.

On the 25th of April, 1806, the British ship *Leander* 50, Captain Whitby, in endeavouring to cut off a small coaster, that was running for Sandy Hook, fired a shot into her, which killed one of her people; and, as this outrage occurred quite near the shore, it excited a strong feeling of indignation, in a portion of the country, at least. But, unfortunately, party spirit had, at that period, taken the worst, most dangerous, and least creditable form, in which it can exist in a free country. By neglecting to place the republic in an attitude to command respect, the government had unavoidably been reduced to appeal to arguments and principles, in those cases in which an appeal to force is the only preservative of national rights, and, in so doing, it opened the door to the admission of sophisms, counter-arguments and discussions, that, in the end, effectually arrayed one half of the community against the other, and this too, on matters in which foreign nations were the real parties on one side, and the common country on the other. In a word, the great mistake was made of admitting of controversy concerning interests that all wise governments hold to be beyond dispute. There will presently be occasion to advert to some of the consequences of this extraordinary state of things, that are more peculiarly connected with our subject.

While the feelings, policy, and preparations of the United States were in the condition just mentioned, the *Chesapeake* 38, was ordered to be put in commission, with a view of sending her to the Mediterranean, as the relief-ship, the time of the people of the Constitution 44, the flag-ship on that station, being nearly up. Captain Charles Gordon, the youngest master-commandant on the list, was attached to the *Chesapeake* as her captain, and Captain James Barron was selected to hoist a broad pennant in her, as commander of the squadron. Both these officers enjoyed high characters in the service; Commodore Barron, in particular, being deemed one of the most ingenious and ready seamen that America had ever produced.

The *Chesapeake* was lying at the navy yard Washington, and was put in commission early in 1807. By an order of the date of February 22d of that year, Captain Gordon was first attached, but the specific orders to Commodore Barron do not appear to have been given until May the 15th. The ship remained at Washington, taking in her masts and stores, and receiving officers and men, until the close of the spring. During this time the English minister informed the government that three deserters from his B. M. ship *Melampus*, had enlisted among the crew of the *Chesapeake*, and he requested that they might be given up. Although the right to demand deserters is not recognised by the laws of nations, there is usually a disposition between friendly governments to aid each other in securing these delinquents, especially when it can be done under circumstances that produce no direct injury, and the matter was referred to Commodore Barron, for investigation, by the navy department. The inquiry appears to have been made in a proper temper, and with a sincere wish to dismiss the men, should they actually prove to be what was represented, though it might be questioned whether the President himself legally possessed any power to give them up to

their own officers. Commodore Barron directed Captain Gordon to inquire into the matter with care, and to make his report. It was ascertained that the three men were actually deserters from the ship named, but they all claimed to be impressed Americans, who had availed themselves of the first opportunity that offered on landing in their native country, to make their escape from illegal and unjust detention. One of these men was said to be a native of the Eastern Shore, a part of the country in which Captain Gordon was born, and that officer, after a careful examination, appears to have been satisfied with the truth of his account. Another was a coloured man, and there was hardly a doubt of the truth of his allegations; while the case of the third seaman, though in part established, was not entirely clear. Under the circumstances, however, a seaman found in the country, and demanding the protection of its laws as a native, could not be given up to a service that was known constantly to violate the rights of individuals, on the naked demand of that service, and in the absence of all affirmative proof of its being in the right. The English minister received the report, and he appears to have been satisfied, as no more was said on the subject.

Although Captain Gordon was attached to the *Chesapeake* in February, he does not appear to have actually taken the command of the ship until the 1st of May, as she was still in the hands of the mechanics. About the beginning of June she sailed from Washington for Norfolk. At this time, there were but twelve guns on board; and, as it is customary for all vessels of war to fire a salute in passing Mount Vernon, it was discovered, on that occasion, that some of the equipments of the guns were imperfect. Orders were issued by Captain Gordon in consequence, though the circumstance probably excited less attention than would otherwise have been the case, on account of the unfinished state of the vessel. The *Chesapeake* arrived in Hampton Roads on the 4th of June, and on the 6th, Commodore Barron paid her a short visit.

Between the 6th of June and the 19th, the remainder of the guns and stores were received on board the *Chesapeake*, her crew was completed to about 375 souls, and, on the latter day, Captain Gordon reported her to Commodore Barron, as ready for sea. Up to the 6th of June, the people had not even been quartered at all, and between that day and the time of sailing, they had been at quarters but three times; on neither of which occasions were the guns exercised.

About 8 A. M., June 23d, 1807, the *Chesapeake* 38, Captain Gordon, bearing the broad pennant of Commodore Barron, got under way, from Hampton Roads, bound to the Mediterranean. At that early day, the armament of the ship consisted of 28 eighteen-pounders on her gun-deck, and of 12 carronades above, making a total of 40 guns. She was a roomy and convenient vessel, but was thought to be weak for her dimensions, and her sailing was remarkable neither way.

A squadron of British ships of war, varying constantly in numbers and vessels, had been watching some French frigates that lay at Annapolis, several months; and it was their practice to lie in Lynn-

haven, or, occasionally, to cruise in the offing. On the 21st of June, this squadron had consisted of three vessels, one of which was the *Bellona* 74, and another the *Melampus* 38, the ship from which the three seamen, already mentioned, had deserted. On the evening of the same day, a fourth vessel, which was afterwards ascertained to be the *Leopard* 50, Captain Humphreys, came in and anchored. The *Leopard* was a small two-decker, had a lower-deck battery of twenty-fours, and is said to have mounted 56 guns. When the *Chesapeake* weighed, up at Hampton Roads, the *Leopard* lifted her anchor, and preceded the American frigate to sea by several miles. The wind was light, at northwest; and as the *Leopard* got an offing, she disappeared behind Cape Henry.

A little after 12 o'clock, the *Chesapeake* was up with the cape, when the wind shifted to the southward and eastward. As she opened the offing, the *Leopard* was seen a few miles distant to windward, heading to the eastward, with apparently very little air. She soon took the new wind, however, when both ships made stretches to get free of the land, there being a good working breeze and perfectly smooth water. The *Leopard* tacked with the *Chesapeake*, though the latter ship appears to have closed with her, the distance between the two vessels gradually lessening. By some accounts the English ship shortened sail in order to allow this. Up to this moment, however, it is the better opinion, that there was nothing unusual, or suspicious, in her movements. The British cruisers were in the habit of standing out in this manner, and the *Leopard* obtained the weather gage altogether by the shift of wind.

About 3 o'clock, both vessels having an offing of some six or eight miles, the *Chesapeake* tacked to the eastward again, and the *Leopard*, then about a mile to windward, wore round and came down upon her weather quarter, when she hailed, informing Commodore Barron that she had despatches for him. In all this there was nothing unusual, despatches having been put on board the *Wasp* 18, Captain Smith, from the *Bellona* 74, a few days previously, the American ship being bound to Europe. Commodore Barron answered that he would heave to, and receive a boat. Both vessels now came to, the *Chesapeake* by laying her main-topsail to the mast, while the accounts appear uncertain, whether the *Leopard* backed her forward or her after sails. At this time, it was observed by some of the officers on board the *Chesapeake*, however, that the English ship had her lower ports triced up, and the tompions out of her guns. It does not appear that the latter fact, the only one of moment, was reported to either Captain Gordon or Commodore Barron.

In a few minutes, a boat from the *Leopard* came alongside of the *Chesapeake*, and her officer was shown into the cabin, where he was received by Commodore Barron. Here the English lieutenant produced an order, signed by Vice-Admiral Berkeley, dated Halifax, June 1st, and addressed to all the captains of the ships under his command, directing them, should they fall in with the *Chesapeake*, out of the waters of the United States, and at sea, to show her commander this order, to "require to search for deserters," and, "to pro-

ceed and search for the same,"* offering at the same time, to allow of a similar search on board their own vessels. Accompanying this order, was a note from the commander of the *Leopard*, addressed to the commander of the *Chesapeake*, referring to the order of the vice-admiral, and expressing a hope "that every circumstance respecting them (the deserters) may be adjusted in a manner that the harmony subsisting between the two countries may remain undisturbed." To this note, Commodore Barron returned an answer, stating that he knew of no such deserters as described. He added, that his recruiting officers had been particularly instructed by the government, not to enter any deserters from the English ships, and that his orders would not allow him to suffer his people to be mustered by any officer but their own.

By referring to this correspondence, which will be found in the appendix, it will be seen that neither the order of Vice-Admiral Berkeley, the note of Captain Humphreys, nor the answer of Commodore Barron, was perfectly explicit on the important points, of whether force would be used, if the alleged deserters were not given up, or whether they would be refused, could it be shown, by any other means than that of being mustered by foreign officers, that the men required were among the *Chesapeake's* crew. In a word, the order and note were vague and general; and the answer, as far as it went, the most direct document of the three, appears to have been framed in a similar spirit. The British officer was ordered to "require" of the captain of the *Chesapeake*, "to search his ship for deserters," &c., and "to proceed and search for the same," &c. Nothing is said of compelling a search; and though the term "require" was a strong one, the whole phraseology of the order was such as might very well raise doubts, under the peculiar circumstances, how far a party, who made professions of a desire to preserve the harmony of the two nations, might feel disposed to violate public law, in order to enforce its object. The note of Captain Humphreys was just as explicit, and just as vague as the order, being a mere echo of its spirit. Commodore Barron very clearly refused to permit a British officer to search for a deserter, while he did not touch the general principle, or what he might do, could it be shown by less objectionable means, that there was a British deserter, of the sort mentioned in the order, on board the *Chesapeake*,† and the demand on the part of the English officers to search in person, was abandoned. Had there even existed a clause in the treaty between England and America, rendering it obligatory on the two nations to deliver up each other's deserters, the requisition of Vice-Admiral Berkeley, taken as an order to search in person, would have so far exceeded the probable construction of reason, as to justify an officer in supposing that nothing beyond a little well-managed intimidation was intended, since nations do not usually permit their treaties to be enforced by any

*See note A, end of volume.

† It would have been illegal for Commodore Barron to give up a man regularly entered among his crew, as a deserter. He might have returned a deserter that came on board his ship, but nothing more.

but their own agents. While there was something very equivocal, beyond doubt, in the whole procedure of the British, it was so high-handed a measure to commence a demand for deserters, by insisting on a right to search a foreign vessel of war in person for them, that it would be very difficult to believe any design to enforce a demand so utterly out of the regular course of things, could be seriously entertained. It ought to be added, that the deserters alluded to in the order of Vice-Admiral Berkeley, were not those from the *Melampus*, already spoken of, but men from other ships, who were supposed to have entered on board the *Chesapeake* at a much later day.*

The English lieutenant was on board the *Chesapeake* some time; the accounts of the length of his visit varying from 15 to 45 minutes. It is probable he was fully half an hour in the cabin. His stay appears to have been long enough to excite uneasiness on board his own ship, for, while Commodore Barron was deliberating on the course he ought to pursue, information was sent below that a signal was flying on board the *Leopard*, which her officer immediately declared to be an order for the return of the boat. Soon after this signal was shown, the answer of Commodore Barron was delivered.

Commodore Barron now sent for Captain Gordon, and told him to get the gun-deck clear, a duty that had been commenced an hour or two before, without reference to the *Leopard*. He then went on deck. Soon after the English officer had passed out of the ship into his own boat, by the larboard, or lee-gangway, Commodore Barron appeared in the starboard, or weather-gangway, to examine the *Leopard*. Here it would seem that the latter was forcibly struck with the appearance of preparation on board the English ship, and the idea that recourse might be had to force began to impress him seriously. He issued an order to Captain Gordon, to hasten the work on the gun-deck, and to go to quarters. In consequence of the latter order, a few taps were beaten on the drum, but that instrument was stopped by directions of Commodore Barron, and instructions were given to get the people to their quarters with as little noise and parade as possible, in order to gain time, if the *Leopard* really meditated hostilities.

It is not easy to imagine a vessel of war in a more unfortunate situation, than that of the *Chesapeake* at this particular moment. With a ship of superior force within pistol-shot, on her weather quarter her guns trained, matches burning, people drilled, and every thing ready to commence a heavy fire, while she herself was littered and lumbered, with a crew that had not yet exercised her guns, and which had been only three times even mustered at their quarters. The business of coiling away her cables, which had lain on the gun-deck until after 2 o'clock, was still going on, while the cabin bulk-head, cabin furniture, and some temporary pantries were all standing aft.

* It is said that one man in particular who had run from the *Halifax* sloop of war, had been seen by his old captain in Norfolk, and that he had insulted the latter in the street. This was the person the English officers were the most anxious to obtain. It does not appear, however, that any men, but those from the *Melampus*, had ever been formally demanded of the proper authorities, though something may have passed on the subject between subordinates.

A good deal of the baggage of the passengers in the ship was also on the gun-deck. It would seem, however, that some of the lieutenants had regarded the movements of the *Leopard* with distrust from the beginning; and the vessel being particularly well officered, these gentlemen soon made an active commencement towards getting the ship clear. The guns were all loaded and shotted, but on examination, it was found that there was a deficiency in rammers, wads, matches, gun-locks, and powder-horns. While things were in this awkward condition, Commodore Barron continued in the gangway examining the *Leopard*. The boat of the latter was about five minutes in pulling back to that vessel, and as soon as the people were out of her, she was dropped astern, where most of her boats were towing, and the English ship hailed. Commodore Barron answered that he did not understand the hail, when the *Leopard* fired a shot ahead of the *Chesapeake*. In a few seconds this shot was followed by an entire broadside. By this discharge, in addition to other injuries done the ship, Commodore Barron, who continued in the gangway, and his aid, Mr. Broom, were wounded. The *Leopard* was now hailed, and some answer was returned, but the noise and confusion rendered all attempts at a communication in this mode useless. A boat was shortly after ordered to be lowered, to be sent to the *Leopard*, but it did not proceed.

Every exertion was making all the while, to get the batteries ready, and with the exception of the forward gun below, the port of which was still down on account of the anchor, it appears that one broadside might have been fired, had not the means of discharging the guns been absolutely wanting. For some time, there was no priming powder, and when an insufficient quantity did finally arrive, there were no matches, locks, or loggerheads. Some of the latter were brought from the galley, however, and they were applied to the priming, but were yet too cold to be of use. In the mean while, the *Leopard*, in an excellent position, and favoured by smooth water, was deliberately pouring in her whole fire upon an unresisting ship. This state of things lasted from twelve to eighteen minutes, when Commodore Barron, having repeatedly desired that one gun at least, might be discharged, ordered the colours to be hauled down. Just as the ensign reached the taffrail, one gun was fired from the second division of the ship.*

The *Chesapeake* immediately sent a boat on board the *Leopard*, to say that the ship was at the disposal of the English captain, when the latter directed his officers to muster the American crew. The three men claimed to be deserters from the *Melampus*, and one that had run from the *Halifax* sloop of war, were carried away. Commodore Barron now sent another note to Captain Humphreys to state his readiness to give up his ship; but the latter declining to take charge of her, a council of the officers was called, and the *Chesapeake* returned to Hampton Roads the same evening.

* This gun was discharged by means of a coal brought from the galley, which was applied by Lieutenant Allen, the officer of the division, with his fingers, after an unsuccessful attempt to make use of a loggerhead.

In this affair, the *Leopard*, of course, suffered very little. The single shot that was fired, it is understood hulled her, but no person was injured. Not so with the *Chesapeake*, although the injuries she sustained, were probably less than might have been expected. The accounts of the duration of the firing, vary from seven to twenty minutes, though the majority of opinions place it at about twelve. But three men were killed on the spot; eight were badly, and ten were slightly wounded; making a total of twenty-one casualties. The *Leopard* appears to have thrown the weight of her grape into the lower sails, the courses and fore-topmast stay-sail having been riddled with that description of shot. Twenty-one round shot struck the hull. As it is known that the first broadside, when vessels are near and in smooth water, usually does as much injury as several of the succeeding, and as all the firing of the *Leopard*, in one sense at least, may be said to have possessed this advantage, the execution she did cannot be considered as any thing remarkable. All three of the lower masts of the American frigate were injured, it is true, and a good deal of rigging was cut; still the impression left by the occurrence went to convince the American service, that English fire was not so formidable as tradition and rumour had made it.

The attack on the *Chesapeake*, and its results, created a strong and universal sensation in America. At first, as ever happens while natural feeling and national sentiment are uninfluenced by calculations of policy, there was but one voice of indignation and resentment, though, in a short time, the fiend of party lifted his head, and persons were not wanting who presumed to justify the course taken by the English vice-admiral. Notwithstanding these exceptions, the general effect was certainly very adverse to the British cause in America, and the injury was not fairly forgotten, until it had been effaced from the public mind by many subsequent victories.

It is scarcely necessary to say that wounded national feeling eagerly sought for some palliative, and, as usually happens in such cases, the commanding officer of the *Chesapeake* soon became the subject of those inconsiderate and unjust comments, which ever accompany popular clamour, when the common self-esteem is lessened. A court of inquiry sat, as a matter of course, and the results were courts-martial on Commodore Barron, Captain Gordon, Captain Hall, the commanding marine officer on board, and the gunner.

The charges produced against Commodore Barron were four, viz: 1st. "For negligently performing the duty assigned him." Under this charge the specifications alleged that he had not sufficiently visited and examined the ship, previously to sailing. 2d. "For neglecting, on the probability of an engagement, to clear his ship for action." There were six specifications under this charge, all tending to the same point. 3d. "Failing to encourage, in his own person, his inferior officers and men to fight courageously." Ten specifications were made under this charge, all, more or less, implicating the military judgment and personal courage of the accused. 4th. "For not doing his utmost to take or destroy the

Leopard, which vessel it was his duty to encounter." Five specifications supported this charge.

There is little question that the government, nation, and we might almost add, the navy, felt a predisposition to condemn Commodore Barron, previously to the trial, for it is the natural and most common refuge of masses of men, to seek a victim whenever they find themselves in any manner implicated in their characters or conduct. The court was well composed, and its hearing was solemn and dignified. It has been said that this tribunal first set the example of a rigid adherence to principles, forms, and precepts in its proceedings, and it has always been spoken of with respect for its impartiality and motives. Of the four charges made, Commodore Barron was entirely acquitted of the first, third, and fourth, and found guilty under the second. Several of the specifications of the other charges were found to be true, but the court decided that they did not involve the guilt implied in the accusations. It was the final decision, that Commodore Barron was guilty of the 5th and 6th specifications of the 2d charge, which were in the following words :—" 5th. In that, the said James Barron did receive from the commanding officer of the Leopard, a communication clearly intimating, that if certain men were not delivered up to him, he should proceed to use force, and still, the said James Barron neglected to clear his ship for action." 6th. " In that, the said James Barron did verily believe from the communication he received from the commanding officer of the said ship Leopard, that the said ship would fire upon the said frigate Chesapeake, or take by force, if they could not be obtained by other means, any British deserters that could be found on board the Chesapeake, and still the said James Barron neglected to clear his ship for action." On these two specifications, under the charge of neglect of duty, Commodore Barron was sentenced to be suspended for five years, without pay or emoluments.

It may be questioned if the order of Vice-Admiral Berkeley and the note of Captain Humphreys will be thought, by all persons, to be " communications clearly intimating" an intention to resort to force, under the peculiar circumstances of the case. The first would seem to have been framed with great art, expressing nothing very clearly, and coupled with the fact of its containing instructions to show the order itself to the American captain, it might very well be supposed to have been no more than an expedient ingeniously devised to obtain the ends of the British officers by intimidation. Could the Chesapeake have been prepared for action, for instance, and the English lieutenant detained, and Commodore Barron, assuming that the order of Admiral Berkeley was an act of hostility, as, in effect, was assumed by the court, attacked and subdued the Leopard, the world would probably have heard the complaints of England for a violation of good faith, under the plea that to " require to search his ship for deserters," with an offer to submit to a similar search on board the British ship, was not necessarily an act of hostility, and that the additional order " to proceed and search for the

same," was merely given under the supposition that the demand contained in the requisition would have been amicably granted.

If the testimony fully sustained the 6th specification, there can be no doubt that Commodore Barron was guilty of culpable neglect, but it may be thought that this point, also, admits of some qualification. It appears, by the finding of the court, that it made up its decision on this specification from two facts, viz. expressions in a note accompanying the official report made of the affair by Commodore Barron to the navy department, and expressions he had used in conversation prior to the attack. As regards the first, Commodore Barron tells the secretary, that the purport of Vice-Admiral Berkeley's order was to take the men by force, in the event of no other means offering, a statement that is certainly not borne out by the order itself, as it has since been given to the world. On his trial, Commodore Barron explains this discrepancy between the fact and his own statement, and which appears to have militated so much against his own interests, by saying that he wrote the note after the affair had occurred, under much bodily suffering from wounds, and great mental agitation, and that he must have confounded the impressions left by events, with opinions formed previously to their occurrence. On examining this part of the subject, it will be seen that the answer is not without much force.

The second fact rests on the testimony of Captain Gordon, who informed the court that, while at dinner, an hour or two before the Leopard closed, Commodore Barron said he distrusted her movements. As respects verbal declarations, they are always to be taken with great allowances, the ordinary language of men being so much qualified by the circumstances under which it is uttered, and they have always been held questionable evidence, except when used in cases of gravity and solemnity. A remark of this nature may have been made without suspecting hostilities, since a demand for deserters, by no means would infer an intention to resort to force, on receiving a denial.

In his defence, Commodore Barron says that he expected another communication from Captain Humphreys, which would have allowed ample time to clear the ship for action, had she been in a condition to engage at all. In short, after carefully reviewing the testimony, and the finding of the court, most persons will be led to believe that Commodore Barron was punished to the fullest extent of his offence, and, whatever may be the dictations of a rigid military code, and the exactions of stern military principles, that he was the victim of circumstances, rather than of any unpardonable error of his own. It would have been safer, wiser, and more in conformity with naval rules, to have gone to quarters as the ships approached each other; and, as soon as the letter of Captain Humphreys was received, it would seem that what before was only expedient became imperative; but the case admits of so much extenuation, that general rules will hardly apply to it. It is highly satisfactory to be able to add, that a court composed of men who, in so many instances, have shown their own devotion to the honour of the flag, closed its finding on the sub-

ject of the personal conduct of the accused, in the following impressive language:—"No transposition of the specifications, or any other modification of the charges themselves, would alter the opinion of the court as to the firmness and courage of the accused. 'The evidence on this point is clear and satisfactory.'"

The trial of Captain Gordon resulted in his being found guilty of negligently performing his duty, in connexion with some trifling informalities in the gunner's reports, and in those of the marine officer. He was sentenced to be privately reprimanded.

Captain Hall, of the marines, fared still better, his offence being purely technical; and in sentencing him to be also privately reprimanded, the court added that if it could have discovered a lighter punishment, it would have inflicted it.

The gunner was cashiered, chiefly because he had neglected to fill a sufficient number of the priming horns, notwithstanding a direct order had been given to that effect, which he had reported executed.

It is not easy to discover any defects in the three last decisions of the court, which would seem to have been justified by the testimony, although it was clearly established by the evidence of nearly all the sea-officers examined, that had they succeeded in firing the guns that were loaded, the means were wanting to discharge a second broadside.

The revelations made by these courts-martial, contain matter for grave reflection; and it may well be questioned, if any impartial person, who coolly examines the whole subject, will not arrive at the conclusion, that the real delinquents were never put on their trial. It must be remembered that in the year 1807, America possessed the experience of three naval wars; that by the force of things, she had created a corps of officers, which, small as it was, had no superior, in any other country; that her artisans put on the ocean as fine vessels of their classes as floated, and that the conviction of the necessity of an efficient marine was deep and general. In the face of all these striking facts, it is seen that four months were required to fit a single frigate for sea, at a yard immediately under the eyes of Congress, and this too at a moment when there existed a pressing necessity for hastening the preparations.* Under such circumstances, we find that this frigate did not receive all her guns until a few days before she sailed; that her crew was coming on board to the latest hour; that her people had been quartered but three days before the ship went to sea, and that the responsible officer was acquitted of neglect, on the plea of the imperious necessity under which he had acted, although it was admitted that when a foreign vessel of war came alongside of his ship to offer, not only an indignity to his flag, but direct violence to his men, his people had never been exercised at their guns. A public cruiser had been sent out in face of those, who, armed at all points, sought her destruction, as uncereemoniously, hurriedly, and negligently, as if her employment was merely that of a passenger-hoy. When it was found that the nation had been dis-

* The Chesapeake was destined to relieve the Constitution; and the crew of the latter ship was actually in a state of mutiny, if they can be called mutineers who were illegally detained, because their times were up, and they were entitled to their discharges.

graced, so unsound was the state of popular feeling, that the real delinquents were overlooked, while their victims became the object of popular censure.

It is an axiom, as true as it is venerable, that a "divided power becomes an irresponsible power." Such, in fact, is the nature of the authority wielded by the national legislature, the neglect of which, in the way of military and naval preparations, would long since have ruined most of the statesmen of the country, had they been guilty of the same omissions, as individuals, that they had sanctioned as bodies of men. We may lament the infatuation, condemn the selfishness, and denounce the abandonment of duty, which impel ambitious politicians to convert the legislative halls into arenas for political controversies that ought never to degrade their deliberations, or impair the sanctity of their oaths; but when we find the consequences of such unconstitutional innovations putting in jeopardy the lives and honours of those who are subject to martial law, a solemn and reproofing sentiment must mingle with the views of every honest citizen, as he maturely considers the hardships of the case.

The act of Vice-Admiral Berkeley was disavowed by the English government, and reparation was made for the wrong.* That officer was recalled from the American station; though the people of the republic found just cause of complaint, in the circumstance that he was shortly after sent to a command that was considered more important. It was, perhaps, fortunate that the attack on the Chesapeake occurred at a moment when the relations between the two countries were rather more amicable than they had been for several years, or it might have led to an immediate declaration of war.

CHAPTER II.

Strange policy of government, as shown in the embargo—More vessels put in commission—Development of gun-boat system—Commencement of armaments on the Lakes—Affair of the President and Little Belt—the merits of that occurrence, and the feeling of the country—The question of the right of Impressment considered.

THE assault of the *Leopard* on the Chesapeake, was replete with political lessons for the people of the United States. It showed the insults and outrages to which nations render themselves liable, when they neglect the means of defence; it demonstrated how boldly their great commercial rivals calculated on the influence of that spirit of

* Although the *Melampus* was not one of the ships mentioned in the order of Vice-Admiral Berkeley, the three deserters from that ship, as has been seen, were taken away, with one from the *Halifax*. Two of the former were returned, and the third died. The two men returned, were delivered on the deck of the ship from which they had been violently taken away. It is understood that the deserter from the *Halifax* was hanged, before orders could be received from England to deliver him up. It is also said that Captain Humphreys was never again employed, in consequence of its being thought that he had exceeded his instructions.

gain which was thought to predominate in the councils of the republic; and it exhibited a determination on the part of the English agents, if not on that of the government, to insist on claims that can never be yielded by independent nations, without a concession of a portion of their sovereign rights. But humiliating as all these considerations make the case, and extraordinary as were the conduct and feeling of the English, the policy pursued by the American government, as a means of punishing the aggressors, and of vindicating the rights of the country, was quite as much out of the ordinary channel of correct reasoning. With a foreign trade that employed 700,000 tons of American shipping alone, Congress passed a law on the 22d day of December, 1807, declaring an unlimited embargo, for all the purposes of foreign commerce, on every port in the Union; anticipating a large portion of the injuries that might be expected from an open enemy, by inflicting them itself!

This extraordinary measure was not avowedly taken in consequence of the attack on the Chesapeake, for the English government early professed a readiness to atone for that outrage, but it originated in the feelings it engendered. The national pride had been wounded, and the injury rankled the deeper, because all intelligent men felt that the nation was not in a condition to resent the insult. The squadron that then lay in Lynnhaven, was probably equal to blockading the entire naval force of the United States of America, and this too, it ought never to be forgotten, in a country that met its current expenses and extinguished an ancient debt, with the duties on its imports alone, which possessed the amount of shipping already mentioned, and had nearly 100,000 registered seamen.

Congress was convened on the 26th of October, and, as soon as there had been time to deliberate on what had passed, the President by his proclamation, interdicted all British vessels of war from entering the American waters. When the national legislature assembled, a proposition to increase the number of gun-boats was laid before it. Without a sufficient naval force to raise a blockade that should be sustained by three ships of the line; with all the experience of the war of the Revolution fresh in their recollections; and with the prospect of a speedy contest with a people that scarcely hesitated about closing the ports of the Union in a time of peace, the statesmen of the day misdirected the resources of a great and growing country, by listening to this proposition, and creating a species of force that, in its nature, is merely auxiliary to more powerful means, and which is as entirely unfitted to the moral character of the people, as it is to the natural formation of the coast. On the 18th of December, a law was passed authorising the construction of 188 gun-boats, in addition to those already built, which would raise the total number of vessels of this description in the navy to 257. This was the developement of the much-condemned "gun-boat system," which, for a short time, threatened destruction to the pride, discipline, tone, and even morals of the service.

There can be no question, that, in certain circumstances, vessels of this nature may be particularly useful, but these circumstances are

of rare occurrence, as they are almost always connected with attacks on towns and harbours. As the policy is now abandoned, it is unnecessary to point out the details by which it is rendered particularly unsuitable to this country, though there is one governing principle that may be mentioned, which, of itself, demonstrates its unsuitness. The American coast has an extent of near two thousand miles, and to protect it by means of gun-boats, even admitting the practicability of the method, would involve an expenditure sufficient to create a movable force in ships, that would not only answer all the same purposes of defence, but which would possess the additional advantage of acting, at need, offensively. In other words, it was entailing on the country the cost of an efficient marine, without enjoying its advantages.

At the time when the laws of nations and the flag of the United States were outraged, in the manner related in the preceding chapter, the government was empowered to employ no more than 1425 seamen, ordinary seamen and boys, in all the vessels of the navy, whether in commission or in ordinary. The administration felt that this number was insufficient for the common wants of the service, and early in 1808, the secretary asked for authority to raise 1272 additional men, to be put on board the gun-boats that were now ready to receive them. The necessary law, however, was withheld.

The near approach of a war, that succeeded the attack of the *Leopard*, appears to have admonished the English government of the necessity of using some efficient means of settling the long-pending disputes between the two nations, and negotiations were carried on during the year 1808, in a temper that promised a pacific termination to the quarrel, and in strict conformity with a practice, (it would be an abuse of terms to call it a policy,) that has long prevailed in the country, the time that should have been actively employed in preparations, was irreclaimably lost, in the idle expectation that they would not be needed. No act was passed, nor any appropriation made, either for the employment of more men, or for the placing in commission any additional vessels, until the last of January, 1809, when the President was directed to equip the *United States* 44, *President* 44, *Essex* 32, and *John Adams* 24; the latter vessel having been cut down to a sloop of war.* By the same law, the navy was greatly increased in efficiency, as respects the officers and men, the President being authorised to appoint as many additional midshipmen as would make a total of 450, and to employ in all, 5025 seamen, ordinary seamen, and boys. By adding the remaining officers, and the marine corps, the whole service could not have contained a

* This ship, which was built at Charleston, South Carolina, has undergone many changes. She was constructed for a small frigate, carrying 24 twelves on her gun-deck; was then cut down to a sloop; next raised upon to be a frigate, and finally once more cut down. It is said that the ship was built by contract, and that the original contractor, let out one side of her to a sub-contractor, who in a spirit of economy, so much reduced her moulds, that the ship had actually several inches more beam on one side, than on the other. As a consequence, she both bore her canvass and sailed better on one tack than on the other. The *John Adams* was rebuilt entirely, a few years since; and the present vessel is one of the most beautiful ships of her class that floats

total of less than 7000 persons, when the act was carried into execution.

The equipment of the ships just mentioned, and the active employment of all the small vessels of the service, probably saved the navy of the United States from a total disorganisation. It was the means of withdrawing a large portion of the officers from the gun-boats, and of renewing that high tone and admirable discipline which had distinguished it, at the close of the Tripolitan war. By this time, nearly all the midshipmen who had been before Tripoli, were lieutenants; and there was already one instance in which an officer, who had entered the navy as a midshipman, commanded the frigate in which he had first served.*

About this time, too, the government seriously turned its attention towards those inland waters on which its future policy might render the employment of vessels of war necessary. Both England and France had used cruisers on the great lakes, in the early history of the country, though the settlements of the former did not extend to their shores, until after the conquest of Canada. In the war of the Revolution, vessels were built on Lake Champlain, by both the belligerents, though in no instance, had any American naval officer ever yet been employed in the interior waters. In the course of the summer of 1808, however, it was thought prudent to make a commencement towards the employment of a force in that quarter, England already possessing ships on Ontario and Erie.

There being no especial law for such an object, advantage was taken of the discretionary powers granted to the President under the act for building gun-boats. A few officers were placed under the orders of Lieutenant M. T. Woolsey, and that gentleman was empowered to make contracts for the construction of three vessels, one of which was to be built on Lake Ontario, and the other two on Lake Champlain. The two vessels constructed on Lake Champlain were merely ordinary gun-boats, but that constructed on Lake Ontario was a regular brig of war. The latter was of about two hundred and forty tons measurement, was pierced for sixteen guns, and when delivered by the contractors, in the spring of 1809, to the sea-officers ordered to receive her, she mounted 16 twenty-four pound carronades. In consequence of an arrangement that was made, about this time, with England, but which was not ratified in Europe, this vessel, which was called the *Oneida*, was not equipped and sent upon the lake till the following year.

This was a period of vacillating policy in both nations, England, at times, appearing disposed to arrange amicably the many different points that had arisen with America, and the latter country acting, at moments, as if it believed war to be impossible, while at others, it seemed to be in earnest with its preparations. Thus passed the years 1808, 1809, and 1810, the embargo having been raised, followed by a non-intercourse law with Great Britain, and succeeded by an absence of all restrictions.

*Captain Decatur.

During this period of doubt, the vessels of the navy that were in commission, were principally employed on the coast, or they kept up the communications with the different diplomatic agents in Europe, by carrying despatches. There is no question that these were important years to the service, for, since the attack on the Chesapeake, the utmost vigilance prevailed, and every commander watched jealously for an opportunity to wipe out the disgrace, real or imaginary, of that unfortunate affair. No more vessels were sent to the Mediterranean, but the whole maritime force of the republic was kept at home. The country had now in active service the following vessels, viz :

President	44,	Hornet	18,
Constitution	44,	Argus	16,
United States	44,	Siren	16,
Essex	32,	Nautilus	12,
John Adams	28,	Enterprise	12,
Wasp	18,	Vixen	12.

In addition to these cruisers, were a great number of gun-boats, which were principally commanded by sailing-masters, who had been selected from among the officers of merchant vessels. The Nautilus and Vixen had both been rigged into brigs; the Enterprise soon after was altered in the same manner, and there proving an occasion to rebuild the Hornet, she was converted into a ship, and pierced for two more guns, making twenty in all. But, unhappily, the opportunity was lost, of building and equipping a force that could prevent blockades.

The English increased their cruisers on the American coast, in proportion to the Americans themselves, though their vessels no longer lay off the harbours, impressing men, and detaining ships. It was seldom that a British cruiser was now seen near the land, the government probably cautioning its commanders to avoid unnecessary exhibitions of this sort, with a view to prevent collisions. Still they were numerous, cruised at no great distance, and by keeping up constant communications between Bermuda and Halifax, may be said to have intercepted nearly every ship that passed from one hemisphere to the other.

Such in effect, was the state of things in the spring of the year 1811, when information was received by the senior officer of the navy afloat, Commodore Rodgers, that a man had been impressed from an American brig, at no great distance from Sandy Hook, by an English frigate that was supposed to be the *Guerriere* 38, Captain Dacres. The broad pennant of Commodore Rodgers was flying on board the President 44, Captain Ludlow, which ship was then anchored off Annapolis. Repairing on board his vessel, he got under way with an intention of proceeding off New York to inquire into the facts, on the 10th of May, passing the capes shortly after.

On the 16th of May, at noon, a sail was made from the President, which ship was then about six leagues from the land, to the southward of New York. It was soon perceived that the stranger was a vessel of war, by the squareness of his yards, and the symmetry of

his sails, and the American frigate stood for him, with an intention to get within hail. At 2 the President set her broad pennant and ensign. The stranger now made several signals, but finding they were not answered, he wore and stood to the southward. Although the President gained upon the chase, the wind lessened, and night set in before she could get near enough to distinguish her force. It was past 7 o'clock in the evening when the stranger took in his studding-sails, hauled up his courses, and came by the wind on the starboard tack. He now set an ensign at his gaff, but it was too dark to discover the nation. As he came to the wind, he necessarily showed his broadside, and was taken for a small frigate.

The President continuing to stand down, the chase wore four several times, in order to prevent the American frigate from getting a position to windward. It was consequently near half past 8 before Commodore Rodgers could bring to, as he had desired, on the weather bow of the stranger, or a little forward of his beam, when, being within a hundred yards, he hailed, and demanded "what ship is that?" No answer was given to this question, but it was repeated, word for word, from the stranger. After a short pause the question was again put, when the stranger fired a gun, the shot from which cut away a breast-back-stay, and entered the main-mast. Commodore Rodgers was on the point of ordering a shot to be returned, when one of the guns was discharged from the second division of the President. The stranger now fired three guns in quick succession, and then, after a short pause, the remainder of his broadside and all his musketry. The President, as a matter of course, delivered her broadside in return. In a few minutes, however, it was perceived on board the American vessel, that they were engaged with an adversary so inferior as to render her resistance very feeble, and orders were sent to the different divisions to stop their fire.

The guns of the President were soon silent, when, to the surprise of all on board her, the stranger opened anew. The fire of the American frigate recommenced, but it was again stopped in the course of a very few minutes, in consequence of the crippled condition of her antagonist, who lay nearly end on, and apparently unmanageable. The American now hailed again, and got an answer that her adversary was a British ship of war, though the name was inaudible, on account of the wind, which had increased. Satisfied that his late opponent was disabled, and having no desire to do more than had already been accomplished, Commodore Rodgers gave the name of his own ship, wore round, and running a short distance to leeward, he hauled by the wind again, with a view to remain nigh the English vessel during the night. The President kept lights displayed, in order to let her late antagonist know her position, and wore several times to remain near her.

When the day dawned the English ship was discovered some distance to leeward, her drift in the night having been considerable. The President bore up under easy canvass, and running down to her, a boat was lowered, and Mr. Creighton, the first lieutenant, was sent on board, with an offer of services. The stranger proved to be

his Britannic majesty's ship *Little Belt* 18, Captain Bingham. The *Little Belt* was a vessel of twenty-two guns, but having a light spar-deck above, on which no guns were mounted, she had the external appearance of a small frigate. She had suffered severely by the fire of the *President*, and thirty-one of her people had been killed and wounded. As Captain Bingham declined receiving any assistance, the vessels parted, each making the best of her way to a port of her own nation.

This occurrence gave rise to much angry discussion in America, and widened the breach which already existed between the English and the American nations. The account given by Captain Bingham differed essentially from that of Commodore Rodgers, and official investigations were made on both sides. On that of the Americans a formal court of inquiry was held, and every sea-officer that was in the ship was examined, as well as a great many of the petty officers. The testimony was very clear, and it was in a great measure free from the discrepancies that usually distinguish the accounts of battles, whether by sea or land. The fact that the *Little Belt* fired the first gun was established by the oath of the officer who ordered the gun fired in return, as this gentleman distinctly testified that he gave the command, under a standing order of the ship, and in consequence of having seen the flash and heard the report of the *Little Belt*'s gun. He not only testified that he heard the report of the gun, but that he also heard the noise made by the shot which entered the mast. Other officers and men corroborated this account, and in a way to render their evidence not only consistent with itself, but with probability. As the *President* was very fully officered, the number and respectability of the witnesses, put all cavilling about the facts at rest in the country.

It is believed that there was no proper court of inquiry held on the conduct of Captain Bingham, though affidavits of most of his officers were published. By that gentleman's official account, as it has been given to the world, as well as by the affidavits mentioned, it is affirmed that the *President* commenced the action by firing, not a single gun, but an entire broadside. He also intimated that the action lasted three quarters of an hour, and appeared desirous of leaving the impression that the *President* had sheered off.

As between the two governments, the question was reduced to one of veracity. If the account of the American officer was true, that of the English officer was untrue. Each government, as commonly happens, seeming disposed to believe its own officer, contrary to what might have been expected, no political consequences followed this rencontre. The *President* sustained little injury, no round shot besides the one in her main-mast, and another in her fore-mast, having struck her, and, of her people, one boy alone was slightly wounded by a musket-ball. The *Little Belt*, on the other hand, having suffered even out of proportion to the disparity of force between the vessels, the American government was satisfied with the punishment already inflicted on the assailants; while the English government could not well demand reparation, without demanding

that the American functionaries would not believe their own officer. After some communications on the subject, and an exchange of the testimony that had been given, nothing further appears to have been done, or contemplated, by either government.

Not so, however, with the people of the two nations. In England the account of Captain Bingham was generally believed, and it served to increase a dislike that was so little concealed as to attract general comment. In America there were two parties, one of which as blindly defended, perhaps, as the other blindly condemned their own officer. A strong feeling existed in the towns, and among a certain portion of the rural population, in favour of what was called the English cause, as the struggles of Great Britain were connected with the general war, and party feeling had blinded so many to the truth, that the country had a great number of persons who, without stopping to examine into facts, were disposed to believe their own government and all its agents wrong, whenever they came at all in collision with that of England. This portion of the community, influenced by the remains of colonial dependence, fostered by the prejudices and influence of English merchants settled in the towns, and strengthened by the acrimony of party, was bitter in its denunciations against Commodore Rodgers; and it may be doubted if that officer ever regained, in the public estimation, the standing that was lost by means so equivocal. They who judge of military life merely by its brilliancy and parade, in moments of display, know little of the privations of the soldier and sailor. Obligated to live under laws that are peculiar to himself, weighed down with a responsibility that makes no show to casual observers, and placed in situations to decide and act in cases in which the principles are contested even by the most acute minds, the officer of rank is entitled to receive every indulgence which comports with justice and reason. Most of all ought he to be protected against the calumnies and assaults of the enemy, and of the disaffected of his own nation. That his country's enemies should assail him wrongfully, though unjustifiable, is perhaps to be expected; but when the blow comes from those who should ever listen coldly to hostile accusations, bitter indeed is the draught that he is made to swallow.

In the case of Commodore Rodgers, much sophistry, in addition to some arguments that were not without their force, was used to show that he was wrong in chasing the *Little Belt*, and in not answering her hail, instead of insisting on receiving a reply to his own. As the case is connected with general principles that are in constant use in the intercourse between vessels, it may be useful to give them a brief examination.

Those who condemned Commodore Rodgers, insisted that it was the duty of a neutral not to chase a belligerent, but to submit to be chased by her; and, as a neutral could have no inducement to conceal her name, he was bound to make a prompt answer when hailed by the *Little Belt*, the latter being a belligerent. These two positions were supported by quotations from some of the writers on international law, who have laid down opinions to this effect.

The laws of nations are merely a set of rules that have grown out of necessity, and which, like the common law, are founded in reason. The received commentators on this code, while they have confined themselves to principles, have been remarkable for their knowledge, and the justice of their deductions; but, in many cases in which they have descended to details, they betray the ignorance which distinguishes the mere man of theory, from him who has been taught in the school of practice. Without the right to chase, a vessel of war would be perfectly useless in a time of peace, and pirates, smugglers, mutineers, and even those vessels which, by being subject to the laws of the same country, are properly amenable to the supervision of a man-of-war, would escape by steering in a direction different from that of the cruiser. No military duty, whatever, could be discharged at sea, without the right to chase; nor is it usual among seamen, to consider the mere act of chasing an act of hostility. Vessels chase each other, even when the object is to ask succour, nor is it possible to deliver despatches, to communicate news, to ask for information, or to do any thing which requires that ships should be near each other, without chasing, when one of the parties sees fit to steer in a wrong direction.

Neither is the right to hail a purely belligerent right, since, like the right to chase, it is clearly a step in communicating, after vessels are near enough to speak. If a hail necessarily brought a true answer, there would be more reason in bestowing the right on belligerents, though even in that case, it would be easy to cite instances in which it would be useless. There may be many wars at the same time, and belligerents that are neutrals as respects each other might meet on the high seas, and if both parties stood on their abstract right to hail, a combat would be inevitable. Belligerents are properly invested with no exclusive privileges that are not in their nature reasonable, and which bring with them direct and useful consequences. Thus the right to hail, without a right to insist on a true answer, is a perfectly negative privilege, and it will not be pretended that ships will not answer as they may see expedient at the moment. So far from the answer to a hail's bringing with it any necessary advantage to the party hailing, in time of war it is often the means of placing the latter in a worse situation than he would be without resorting to the hail at all. Such was the fact in the case of the *Philadelphia* when destroyed, the people of that ship having been lulled into a fatal security by the answer received to their hail. In short, as the right to hail brings with it no necessary advantage, it is folly to attribute it to any party as an exclusive privilege. Vessels of war must ascertain which are enemies, and which are neutrals, in the best manner they can, as civil officers are compelled to look out the individuals they would arrest in society, being certain that both foes and debtors will deceive those who seek them, if there is a motive and an opportunity.

But the vindication of Commodore Rodgers' course is by no means limited to this argument. He was cruising on his own coast, where it was the particular province of a vessel of war to exercise

vigilance, and particularly to be on the alert, lest the belligerents themselves exceeded their powers. Neutrals are by no means destitute of rights of this important nature. It was known that the English cruisers were in the practice of seizing American vessels on pretences that were not recognised by international law, and of even impressing seamen under a regulation that was purely municipal, and which, so far from being in accordance with the laws of nations, was not only opposed to them, but which was a direct violation of national rights, of common sense, reason, and natural justice. This was not all; in executing this municipal law on the high seas, they even exceeded the limits acknowledged by themselves, and were in the constant practice of carrying off Americans, and seamen of other nations, from American ships, as well as the subjects of the British crown. As it is clearly the general duty of the commander of an American vessel of war, to prevent the violation of the laws of nations, whenever it is in his power, unless expressly ordered by his own government not to interfere, it was more particularly the duty of such a commander to be vigilant, and to prevent these abuses on his own coast. No English vessel of war would hesitate an instant, in preventing impressment from a merchant ship of his nation, nor should any American. The American commander of a public ship, who should passively witness an impressment from a merchant vessel of his own nation, unless restrained by his orders, would deserve to be cashiered. As connected solely with public law and general justice, there can be no question that the commander of a vessel of war, who knew that a countryman had been impressed by a ship of another nation, would have a perfect right to pursue that ship, and, at need, to liberate the man by force. That high considerations of policy have hitherto prevented the American government from issuing orders to that effect, or have induced it to issue orders of a contrary nature, in no degree impairs a right which is connected with one of the principal objects for which vessels of war are kept afloat, the protection of the person and property of the citizen, when beyond the reach of local authority. How far Commodore Rodgers was authorised to act in this manner, by his own government, or whether he was prohibited from interfering at all on motives of policy, does not appear; but we are bound to believe that every officer is disposed to do his whole duty. As the subject is connected with the causes of quarrel which, shortly after the rencontre between the President and Little Belt, produced a war between the two countries, this may be a proper place to make a further allusion to the occurrences and claims that brought about that important event.

From the period of the commencement of the general war in Europe, the American commerce had been exposed to a series of decrees, orders in council, blockades, and constructions of belligerent rights that were entirely novel, both in principles and practice, and which, in the end, rested on a justification no better than a determination to retaliate for the wrongs done to neutrals through the hostile nation, by punishing the sufferer. It is unnecessary to add, that Great Britain and France were the nations that pursued this high-handed

and illegal policy, unduly subjecting all the rest of Christendom to the consequences of their quarrels. In this strife in injustice, there was not any essential difference in the conduct of the two great belligerents, so far as principle was concerned, though England was enabled to do America much the most harm, in consequence of her superior power on the ocean.

To the wrongs inflicted on the American commerce, by means of her illegal blockades and forced constructions of colonial privileges, England, however, added the intolerable outrage of impressment from on board American vessels on the high seas.

The government of England claims a right, by prescription, to require the services of all its own seamen, as well as those of all subjects who may be deemed vagabonds, for the royal navy, in a time of war. Some exceptions are made in favour of apprentices and others, either by statutes or by concessions from the administration, but these do not impair the principle. That communities have a legal right to make any regulations of this nature is not disputed, though in exercising privileges that the usages of mankind tolerate, nothing is easier than to offend against natural justice and the laws of God. It is evident, in the first place, that a law or a usage, which compels a particular portion of society to serve on board ships, for an unlimited period, without reciprocity as regards their fellow-subjects, and for a compensation determined by the state, is founded in injustice. England may find her justification for the practice in her necessities, perhaps, though necessity is but a poor apology for any moral wrong, but it cannot be seriously contended that she has a right to make another people an accessory, directly or indirectly, to the oppression. In considering the purely legal question, this moral consideration should never be lost sight of.

Admitting, in the fullest extent, the right of a nation to impress its own citizens or subjects, it is, in no manner, a belligerent right. The fact that it claims no power to exercise the practice in a time of peace, does not give the latter, in the least, the character of a belligerent right, since all belligerent rights are deducible from international law, whereas the authority to impress is derived solely from the government in which the practice exists. That England exercises the power to impress only in a time of war, is dependent on her own will, whereas a belligerent right would be altogether independent of local control. It is just as competent for the parliament of Great Britain to say it will impress in a time of peace, as it is to permit impressment in time of war, or for it to except certain classes from the operation of the practice. The king of England, according to the theory of the British constitution, makes war, and it is the king who requires the services of this particular class of his subjects; and if he thus requires them under the law of nations, the parliament has no power to curtail his authority. In passing a law to exempt any portion of the community from impressment, the English government itself admits that the authority to impress, is derived from municipal, and not from international law. The only privilege conferred by the usages of nations, in connexion with this practice,

is the permission for each country to make its own municipal regulations; and in granting to England the right to impress her own seamen, they also grant to America the right to say that no impressment shall take place under the American flag.

The fact, however, that impressment is a local and not a general right, is independent of all *ex parte* admissions, or narrow regulations. There must be an entire reciprocity, in the nature of things, in all international law; and no country that in the least defers to natural justice, can devote a particular class of its people to a compulsory service in vessels of war. It follows as necessary consequences, that the monstrous doctrine must be asserted, that one nation shall not respect natural justice in its laws, because it is not convenient for all other nations to imitate it; that reciprocity is not necessary to international law; or that impressment is strictly a national and not an international regulation. For a particular people to pretend to legislate on, or to qualify, in any manner, a right derived from the laws of nations, is an insult to the community of nations, since it is arrogating to themselves a power to control that which is only dependent on common consent.

If it be admitted that the right to impress is solely a municipal power, it follows inevitably that it cannot legally be practised on the high seas, on board of vessels of a nation different from that of the party claiming to exercise the authority. No principle is better settled than that which declares a ship, for all the purposes of municipal law, to be solely within the jurisdiction of her own flag, while out of all territorial jurisdiction. England might just as legally claim to arrest persons for treason, poaching, or crime of any sort, on board American vessels on the high seas, as to claim a right to impress even her own seamen. Both cases would be an attempt to extend the jurisdiction of one people over the authority of another.

Although, as a general rule, impressment and the seizure of criminals on board American vessels on the high seas, would be an equal violation of public and municipal law, as a particular grievance the former practice would give more just ground of complaint than the latter. The arrest of a criminal merely invades the jurisdiction and offends the sovereignty of a people, while impressment inflicts a serious practical evil, by depriving ships of their crews, at a moment when they have the greatest need of them. Did England actually possess the right to take her seamen on the high seas, America, under those great principles that pervade all law, whether public or private, would have a claim to insist that this right should be exercised in a way to do her the least possible injury.

Such are the general principles that touch the case. An examination of the subordinate facts leaves England still less justification for the practice she asserts. In the first place, that country contends that America gives employment to a large number of British subjects in her mercantile and her public marine. This is true; but England does the same as respects all other nations. During the general wars, the merchant vessels of Great Britain receive seamen from all parts of the world, and probably one half of those thus employed

are foreigners, Americans included. Not only are volunteers of all nations received in her ships of war, but frequently men are impressed who have not the smallest personal, or national, similitude to English subjects. It is true, that England never asserted a right to take any but her own subjects, on the high seas or elsewhere, but it is equally true, that, in exercising the right she claims, her agents have impressed thousands of native Americans.* The excuse for taking these men, was the difficulty of distinguishing between an English and an American sailor, by mere external evidence. This difficulty, of itself, is an additional reason why England should hesitate about resorting to the practice, even admitting the right to exist, since it is a governing principle which qualifies the exercise of every right, that it is not to be used affirmatively, to the prejudice of third parties.

That England may need the services of her seamen, in no manner entitles her to violate neutral privileges to obtain them. Such a doctrine would authorise a belligerent nation, in its extremity, to rob the treasury of a neutral, in order to pay its troops. The attempt which has been made, in connexion with this subject, to liken the necessities of states to the necessities of individuals, involves a violation of all principle. There is no just similitude between the cases. The man who is starving, probably commits no moral crime, when, after having exhausted all the legal means of procuring nourishment that are in his power, he takes food that does not belong to him, since in all respects he yields to an imperious natural necessity; but the nation that urges such an excuse for its violations of neutral and legal rights, is merely upholding artificial interests, and those too that are often unjust in themselves, by artificial expedients. But, even admitting the validity of this argument, it does not affect the rights of this country to resist the expedients of this necessity. We may not censure the drowning man who fastens upon our legs, but no one will dispute out right to shake him off.

Expediency has no necessary connexion with right; but if the necessities of England are to be used as an argument in favour of her doctrine of impressment, so may necessity be used against it on the part of America. The first is a country with an overflowing population, among whom men are driven to obtain livelihoods in the best manner they can. Thus, in time of peace, the excess of seamen, in Great Britain, drives them abroad to seek employment, and they have the effect to keep the American on shore, by lowering prices. As a consequence, a large portion of the men in American ships are English sailors, who, under the doctrine of England, are all liable to be reclaimed for the service of that country, in a time of war. This system is evidently rendering the American mercantile marine a

* It has been satisfactorily ascertained that the number of impressed Americans on board British ships of war, was seldom less than the entire number of seamen in the American navy, between the years 1802 and 1812. At the declaration of war in 1812, the number that was turned over to the prison ships for refusing to fight against their own country, is said to have exceeded two thousand. The propriety of such a policy need not be argued.

nursery for English seamen, and converting a legitimate means of national force, into a scheme for destroying it.*

The principles that control this interest, are of a very simple character. Each nation has a right to make its own municipal ordinances, and the country that claims the services of its seamen, is bound to extend its regulations so far as to keep that class of its subjects within its own jurisdiction, or to incur the risk of having its claim defeated, by the conflicting rights of other states.

CHAPTER III.

Events just preceding the war—Constitution at Portsmouth—at Cherbourg, &c—State of the navy in 1812—Marine Corps—Policy of the government in reference to the navy in the event of war—Feeling of the country on the subject.

It has been seen that no consequences, beyond an increased alienation between the two countries, followed the rencontre between the President and Little Belt. Although the American navy could not exult in a victory over a force as inferior as that of the English vessel, it did not fail to make comparisons between the effect of the fire of their own frigate, and that of the Leopard, in the attack on the Chesapeake. In both cases the water was sufficiently smooth, and the trifling resistance made by the Little Belt, was so much against the chances of the President, as the Chesapeake made no resistance at all. Close observers noted the important fact, that the English ship, in twelve minutes' unresisted firing, killed and wounded but twenty-one persons among a frigate's ship-company, while the American vessel, in a firing of but six or eight minutes, had killed and wounded thirty-one on board a sloop of war.†

Not long after the meeting between the President and Little Belt, the United States 44, bearing the broad pennant of Commodore Decatur, fell in with the Eurydice and Atalanta, British ships, off New York, and, while the commanders were hailing, one of the seamen of the former vessel, in carelessly handling the lanyard of his lock, fired a gun.‡ The reader will learn in this fact, the high state of preparation that then prevailed in an American man-of-war, the lock having been cocked, and every thing in perfect readiness to commence an action, at a moment's notice. Happily both parties were cool

*The actual state of things places England still more in the wrong, as regards her pretension. It is a matter of notoriety that the legal authorities of that country export families of paupers to this hemisphere, in order to be relieved from them. The government also encourages emigration. To set up the claim of allegiance against families thus driven away, to be saddled on other nations, is an outrage on common sense.

† In consequence of the President's forging ahead, her forward guns were not all fired the second time.

‡ This was the excuse of the man. Commodore Decatur believed that the gun was fired intentionally by its captain, with a view to bring on an engagement. So strong was the feeling among the seamen of the day, that such an occurrence is highly probable.

and discreet, and proper explanations having been made, the English commander was entirely satisfied that no insult, or assault was intended.

During the remainder of the year 1811, and the commencement of that of 1812, the public ships were kept actively cruising on the coast, as before, or they were employed in communicating with the different diplomatic agents in Europe.

About this time, the *Constitution* 44, Captain Hull, was sent to Europe, having on board specie for the payment of the interest on the debt due in Holland. After touching at Clierbourg, the *Constitution* went off the Texel, and landing her money, though not without great difficulty, in consequence of the roughness of the weather, and the great distrust of those on shore, who were closely blockaded by the English, she proceeded to Portsmouth, where she remained a few days, in order to communicate with the legation at London.

Having despatched his business in England, Captain Hull sailed for France. The day succeeding the night on which the *Constitution* left Portsmouth, several sail of English men-of-war were seen in chase, and as there had been some difficulty about deserters while in port,* it was the impression on board the American ship that the

* While lying at anchor in the roads, a man let himself into the water, and swam with the tide to the Madagascar frigate, which was lying directly astern of the *Constitution*. The deserter was too much exhausted when first taken up, to state his object, and the Madagascar sent a boat to acquaint the officers of the *Constitution* that one of their men had fallen overboard, and had been picked up by that ship. Accordingly, a cutter was sent in the morning to procure the man, when the officer was told that he had claimed protection as an Englishman, and that he had been sent on board the guard-ship. Captain Hull was not on board at the time, and Mr. Morris, the first lieutenant, sought an interview with Sir Roger Curtis, the admiral then in command at Portsmouth. Mr. Morris was very politely received, and he stated his errand. The admiral informed him, that it was not in his power to give up a deserter who claimed to be a British subject. "Have you any evidence, Sir Roger, beyond the man's own word, that he is actually an Englishman?" "None whatever, sir, but we are obliged to take his declaration to that effect." Nothing remained for the American officer but to return on board his own ship.

That night extra sentinels were posted, with positive orders to fire at any thing that might be seen floating near the ship. About midnight two or three muskets were discharged, and, on inquiry, it was found that there was a man in the water close alongside. A boat was lowered, and it brought on board a seaman of the Madagascar, who had contrived to buoy himself up by means of some shells of blocks, and, profiting by a turn in the tide, to drift down upon the *Constitution*. This man was asked what countryman he was, and he answered, in a strong Irish accent, "an American, your honour." He was sent below, with orders to take good care of him.

The next day the deserter was inquired after, and it was intimated that as he said he was an American, he could not be given up. It is believed, however, that no formal demand was made for the man, though it was rumoured on shore that there would be trouble when the *Constitution* attempted to go to sea, as it was known she was about to do that night. In the course of the day two frigates came and anchored near her, when disliking his berth, the American commanding officer got under way, and dropped out about a mile farther to seaward. So close were the British ships at the time, that the pilot expressed his apprehensions of getting foul of one of them, and he was told to go foul, if he could do no better. By careful handling, however, the ship went clear.

A frigate followed the *Constitution* to her new anchorage. About 8 o'clock, Captain Hull, who was now on board, ordered the ship cleared for action. The lanterns were lighted, fore and aft, and the people went to quarters, by beat of drum. It is not easy to portray the enthusiasm that existed in this noble ship, every officer and man on board believing that the affair of the Chesapeake was about to be repeated, so far at least, as the assault was concerned. The manner in which the people took hold of the gun-tackles has been described as if they were about to jerk the guns through the ship's sides. An officer who was passing through the batteries, observed to the men, that if there was an occasion to fight, it would be in their quarrel, and that he expected good service from

vessels were sent in pursuit. The *Constitution* outsailed all the strangers but one, a frigate that weathered upon her. After leading this ship a long distance ahead of the others, Captain Hull hove to, beat to quarters, and waited to know her object. It fortunately proved to be amicable.

Before quitting Cherbourg, off which place English cruisers were constantly hovering, it had been agreed that the *Constitution*, on her return, should show a particular signal, in order that the French batteries might not mistake her for a cruiser of the enemy. On reaching the entrance of the port, one of the English vessels kept close to the American frigate, while the latter was turning up into the roads, with a fresh breeze, and in thick weather. Unfortunately, some strong objections existed to making the signal, and the batteries fired a gun. The shot struck the *Constitution* in the bends. It was soon followed by a second that flew between the masts. A third passed through the hammocks stowed in the waist, and stove one of the boats. The steadiness of the frigate now induced the French to pause, and an opportunity offering soon after to show the signal, the firing ceased. The English ship bore up, as soon as the battery opened.*

The *Hornet* 18, Captain Lawrence, followed the *Constitution* to Europe, and the *Wasp* the *Hornet*. In this manner did the autumn of 1811, and the spring of 1812 pass, ship succeeding ship, with the despatches and diplomatic communications that so soon after terminated in the war with England. As we are now approaching the most important period in the history of the American navy, it may be well to take a short review of its actual condition.

Between the reduction in 1801, and the commencement of 1812, a period of eleven eventful years, during which the nation was scarcely a day without suffering violations of its neutral rights, not a single frigate had been added to the navy! The ships of the line authorised in 1799 were entirely abandoned, and notwithstanding the critical relations of the country, the experience of the past, and so many years of commercial prosperity, the navy, in some respects, was in a worse situation than after the sale of the ships in 1801. Of the thirteen frigates retained at that time, the *Philadelphia* 38, had been taken and destroyed, and the *New York* 36, *General Greene* 28, and *Boston* 28, had gone to decay, without repairs. Thus, in

them. "Let the quarter-deck look out for the colours," was the answer, "and we will look out for the guns." In short, it was not possible for a ship's company to be in a better humour to defend the honour of the flag, when the drum beat the retreat, and the boatswain piped the people to the capstan-bar. The ship lifted her anchor, and stood over towards Cherbourg, however, without being followed. There is no doubt that the prudence of Sir Roger Curtis alone prevented an engagement of some sort or other, on this occasion. That officer probably felt, as many of the older officers of the British service are understood to have felt, the injustice of the English system, particularly as it was practised towards America.

* One of those singular cases of death, is said to have occurred on board the *Constitution*, on this occasion, that sometimes follow injuries inflicted by cannon-shot. A midshipman was passing along the ship's waist, at the moment the shot that stove the boat entered, and he fell. He was taken up, carried below, and in a day or two died, though no external hurt was visible. It is supposed that the shot must have produced the death, though in what manner is unknown.

point of fact, though twelve ships of this class appear on the list of the day, but nine actually existed, for any practical purposes. The various vessels of inferior force, that have been already mentioned in this work, as constructed under different laws, had been added to the navy, while two or three temporarily taken into the service were already sold. A few small schooners had been purchased. Navy yards had been established at Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Washington, Gosport, and Portsmouth, though they were still in their infancy, and very incomplete. One hundred and seventy gun-boats had also been built, and were distributed in the different ports of the country.

While the navy on the whole, the gun-boats excepted, had rather lost than gained in physical force, since the reduction of 1801, it had improved immeasurably in discipline, tone, and in an *esprit de corps*. The little that had been lost, in these respects, through the service in gun-boats, was more than regained by the effect produced by the attack on the Chesapeake, and the constant state of excitement that prevailed with regard to English aggressions, during the few preceding years. The lists of captains, masters-commandant, and lieutenants were small, but filled with men trained to obedience, and consequently, qualified to command. It is true, but one of the officers of the Revolution remained, who was at the head of the service; and he was nearly superannuated by years and infirmities; but those to whom they had imparted their traditions and spirit had succeeded them. Commodore Samuel Nicholson, whose name first appeared in our pages, in 1776, as commander of the *Dolphin 10*, died at the head of the service at the close of the year 1811. The celebrated Preble had preceded him several years to the grave, and Commodore Murray alone remained of those officers who might be said to have belonged to the old school.* Still, the new school was in no respect

* Edward Preble was born in August, 1761, at Portland, in the present state, then province, of Maine. His direct ancestor, Abraham Preble, lived in the colonies as early as 1637, at least, and his father, Jedediah Preble, died at Portland in 1784, having held the rank of Brigadier General in the militia of the Revolution. Young Preble went early to sea, and is said to have served as a midshipman, in the Massachusetts state ship *Protector*, Captain Williams, in her hard-fought action with the *Duff*. He appears subsequently on board the *Winthrop*, Captain Little, a cruiser in the service of the same state, as her first lieutenant. In this capacity, he boarded and carried, in the *Penobscot*, a strong letter of marque, an exploit that, in its day, was thought to be little inferior to the capture of the *Philadelphia*. At the peace of 1783, Mr. Preble, who was then but twenty-two, was compelled to retire to private life, though he carried with him a reputation that was not forgotten. During the twelve or fourteen years that succeeded, Mr. Preble was employed in command of merchant vessels, increasing his nautical experience, and improving his private circumstances. He also married.

When the present navy was established, Mr. Preble entered it as one of the senior lieutenants. He is believed to have been the first of the 1st lieutenants ordered to the *Constitution 44*; and as the principle was laid down, that the officers of the frigates first built, should have relative rank agreeably to the seniority of their captains, this would have made Mr. Preble the second lieutenant in the navy. He did not remain long in the *Constitution*, however, his name appearing as early as 1798, in command of the *Pickering 14*. The commission of lieutenant commandant, is known to have been issued during the war with France, and Mr. Preble's name standing in the reports of the day as a lieutenant commandant he is believed to have held it. On the 15th of May, 1799, Mr. Preble was raised to the rank of captain, without having passed by that of master-commandant. He was shortly after appointed to the *Essex 32*, of which ship he was the first commander. While in the *Essex*, he cruised as far as the East Indies, returning home about the time peace was restored. No opportunity occurred for Captain Preble to distinguish himself

inferior ; and in some particulars, it was greatly the superior of that which had gone before it. The vessels, generally, were good ships of their respective classes, and the officers, as a body, were every way worthy to take charge of them. Several of those who had been retained as midshipmen, after the war with France, were already commanders, and the vessels beneath the rate of frigates, with one exception, were commanded by gentlemen of this description. The exception was in the case of the *Wasp* 18, on board which ship was Captain Jones, who had been the youngest of the lieutenants retained in 1801, and who was now nearly the oldest master-commandant. He had joined the service, however, as a midshipman.

If the naval armaments made by the country, under the prospect of a war with Great Britain, are to be regarded with the eyes of prudence, little more can be said, than to express astonishment at the political infatuation which permitted the day of preparation to pass unheeded. Still a little was done, and that little it is our duty to record.

Early in 1809, the marine corps was augmented by an addition of near 700 men, which probably put this important branch of the navy, on a footing equal to the rest of the service, as it then existed ; the entire corps containing about 1300 men when full. On the 30th of March, 1812, or less than three months previously to the war with England, Congress authorised the President to cause three additional frigates to be put in service, and the sum of \$200,000 annually was appropriated for the purchase of timber to rebuild the three frigates that had been permitted to decay, and the one that had been captured.

When the amount of these appropriations is considered, the conclusion would seem inevitable, that the government did not at all anticipate hostilities, were it not for the more ample preparations that were making on land, and the large sums that had been expended on gun-boats. It is not improbable, therefore, that those to whom the direction of affairs was confided, believed the naval force of the country too insignificant, and that of Great Britain too overwhelm-

in this war. In 1803, Captain Preble hoisted his broad pennant on board the *Constitution*, as commander of the Mediterranean squadron. His services in that important station, are already related in the body of the work.

Commodore Preble suffered much from ill health, and after his return home, he was employed in the command of a navy yard. He died August the 25th, 1807.

The name of Preble will always be associated with the reputation of the American navy. He was the first officer who ever commanded a series of active military operations, in squadron, against an enemy, unless the irregular and anomalous cruise of Paul Jones entitled him to that distinction ; none of the other commands, during the two previous wars, partaking exactly of this character. In addition to this advantage, Commodore Preble had high professional qualities. Although, personally, far from being a favourite with those under his orders, he possessed the perfect respect, and entire obedience of his subordinates. His discipline was high-toned, and his notions of the duties of an inferior, were of the most rigid kind. On one occasion, he is known to have sternly rebuked an officer for covering and protecting a bombard against an attempt to cut her off, because it was done without a signal from the flag-ship. He was, however, generous and liberal in his appreciation of merit, and quite ready to do justice to all who deserved his commendations. As he died at the early age of 45, the country lost many years of service that it had expected ; and Commodore Preble himself, in all probability, much renown that one of his character would have been likely to gain in the war that succeeded.

ing, to render any serious efforts to create a marine, at that late hour, expedient. A comparison of the naval forces of Great Britain and the United States, with their respective conditions, will render this idea plausible, although it may not fully justify it, as a measure of policy.

In 1812, the navy of Great Britain nominally contained a thousand and sixty sail, of which between seven and eight hundred were efficient cruising vessels. France had no fleets to occupy this great marine, Spain was detached from the alliance against England, the north of Europe no longer required a force to watch it, and Great Britain might direct at once, towards the American coast, as many ships as the nature of the war could possibly demand.

As opposed to this unexampled naval power, America had on her list the following vessels, exclusively of gun-boats, viz :

Constitution	44,	John Adams	28,
President	44,	Wasp	18,
United States	44,	Hornet	18,
Congress	38,	Argus	16,
Constellation	38,	Siren	16,
Chesapeake	38,	Oneida	16,
New York	36,	Vixen	14,
Essex	32,	Nautilus	14,
Adams	28,	Enterprise	14,
Boston	28,	Viper	12.

Of these vessels, the New York 36, and Boston 28, were unseaworthy, and the Oneida 16, was on Lake Ontario. The remainder were efficient for their rates, though the Adams required extensive repairs before she could be sent to sea. It follows that America was about to engage in a war with much the greatest maritime power that the world ever saw, possessing herself but seventeen cruising vessels on the ocean, of which nine were of a class less than frigates. At this time the merchant vessels of the United States were spread over the face of the entire earth. No other instance can be found of so great a stake in shipping with a protection so utterly inadequate.

If any evidence were wanting to show how much facts precede opinion in America, it would be amply furnished in this simple statement. Throughout the whole of the events we have been required to record, we have seen that the navy has followed the exigencies of the state, or the absolute demands of necessity, instead of having been created, fostered, and extended, as the cheapest, most efficient, and least onerous means of defence, that a nation so situated could provide.

In addition to her vast superiority in ships, Great Britain possessed her islands in the West Indies, Bermuda, and Halifax, as ports for refitting, and places of refuge for prizes, while, on the part of America, though there were numerous ports, all were liable to be blockaded the moment an enemy might choose to send a force of two line-of-battle ships and one frigate to any given point; for it is not to be concealed that three two-decked ships could have driven the whole of the public cruising marine of America before them, at the time of

which we are writing. Such was the condition of a great maritime people, on the eve of a serious war, and in defiance of the experience of a struggle, in which the men in power had been prominent actors!

There can be but one manner of accounting for this extraordinary state of things, that already mentioned of the belief of the impossibility of keeping vessels at sea, in face of the overwhelming force of Great Britain. It is in corroboration of this opinion, that a project is said to have been entertained by the cabinet of laying up all the vessels in ordinary, with a view to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy. This step would have been a death-blow to the navy, for the people would have been perfectly justifiable in refusing to support a marine, that was intended solely for peace. It is affirmed that this resolution was only prevented by the interference of two officers of the service, who happened to be at the seat of government when the subject was under discussion. These gentlemen* are said to have made a vigorous written remonstrance against the scheme, and by means of their representations to have induced the cabinet to change its policy.

Under ordinary circumstances the intention just stated, would have been indicative of great feebleness of action, and of a narrowness of views, that was entirely unsuited to the characters of statesmen. But the circumstances were extraordinary. Not only was the marine of Great Britain much the most powerful of any in the world, but it was more powerful than those of all the rest of Christendom united. In addition to its actual physical force, it had created for itself a moral auxiliary that was scarcely less available in practice than its guns and men. The reputation of invincibility was very generally attached to an English man-of-war, and perhaps no people gave England more ample credit for every species of superiority, whether physical or moral, that she claimed for herself, than those of the United States of America. The success of the British navy was indisputable, and as few Americans then read books, or journals, in foreign tongues, while scarcely a newspaper appeared without its columns containing some tribute to British glory, it would not be easy to portray the extent of the feeling, or the amount of the credulity that generally existed on such subjects.

That the officers of the navy should, in a great degree, be superior to this dependent feeling was natural. They had enjoyed means of comparison that were denied the bulk of their fellow-citizens, and

*Captains Bainbridge and Stewart. These two officers were shown orders to Commodore Rodgers not to quit New York, but to keep the vessels in port to form a part of its harbour defence. They sought an interview with the Secretary, who was influenced by their representations, and who procured for them an audience of the President. Mr. Madison listened to the representations of the two captains, with attention, and observed that the experience of the Revolution confirmed their opinions. The cabinet was convened, but it adhered to its former advice. Captains Bainbridge and Stewart, then addressed a strong letter to the President, who took on himself to change the plan. It is said, that one or two of the cabinet acceded to this decision, on the ground that the ships would soon be taken, and that the country would thus be rid of the cost of maintaining them, and at more liberty to direct its energies to the army. It is no more than just to state, that Mr. Gallatin, the only survivor of that cabinet, asserts his utter ignorance of any such plan. On the other hand, there is good proof that such a project did exist in the Department, and of the interference of the two officers named.

the result had taught them more confidence in themselves. They knew that their ships were at least as good as those of England, that they sailed as fast, were worked as well, and, in every essential on which a seaman prides himself, that England could justly claim no other superiority than that which might be supposed to belong to her greater experience in naval warfare. Against this odds, they were willing to contend. Not so with the nation. Notwithstanding the best dispositions on the part of a vast majority of the American people, the conviction was general that an American vessel of war would contend against an English vessel of war with very few chances of success. After making every allowance for equality in all the other essentials, the great point of practice was against the former, and the confidence produced by a thousand victories, it was believed, would prove more available than zeal or courage.

It is not as easy to describe the feeling on the other side. Among the young officers of the British navy it is pretty safe to say that a notion of overwhelming superiority was very generally prevalent, but among the older men there were many who had studied the American cruisers with observant eyes, and a few who still recollected the war of the Revolution, when ill-equipped, uncoppered and half-manned ships, had rendered victory dear, and, not unfrequently, defeat certain. The journals of Great Britain indulged in that coarse and impolitic abuse, which had probably done more towards raising a hostile feeling throughout Christendom against their nation, than any political injustice, or political jealousies; and the few ships of the American navy did not escape their sneers and misrepresentations. One of the very last of the vessels they attempted to hold up to the derision of Europe was the *Constitution*, a frigate that was termed "a bunch of pine boards," sailing "under a bit of striped bunting." As indecorous as was this language, and as little worthy as it might be to excite feeling, or comment, America was too keenly alive to English opinion, to hear it with indifference, and the day was at hand when she exultingly threw back these terms of reproach, with taunts and ridicule almost as unbecoming as the gibes that had provoked them.

There is little doubt that even the friends of the navy looked forward to the conflict with distrust, while the English felt a confidence that, of itself, was one step towards victory.

CHAPTER IV.

War declared against England—Vessels sail on a cruise—Chase of the *Belvidera* 36; and action with that ship—Cruise of Com. Rodgers—*Constitution* sails under Capt. Hull—Her brilliant escape from an English squadron—*Essex* 32, Capt. Porter, sails on a cruise—captures the *Alert* 15—*Constitution* captures the *Guerriere*—Effect of the victory—Promotion of Lt. Morris to be a captain.

ALLUSION has been made to the events which led to hostilities between America and England, though they belong to the political rather than to the naval history of the country. In the winter of 1812, a plot on the part of English agents, to sever the American Union, was revealed to the government; and, at a later day, the determination of the English ministry to adhere to her orders in council, was formally communicated to the President. At the same time, the claim to impress English seamen out of American ships on the high seas, was maintained in theory, while in practice, the outrage was constantly extended to natives; the boarding officers acting, in effect, on the unjust and perfectly illegal principle, that the seaman who failed to prove that he was an American, should be seized as an Englishman. Owing to these united causes, Congress formally declared war against the King of Great Britain, on the 18th of June, 1812.

At the moment when this important intelligence was made public, nearly all of the little American marine were either in port, or were cruising in the immediate vicinity of the coast. But a single ship, the *Wasp* 18, Captain Jones, was on foreign service, and she was on her return from Europe with despatches. It is, however, some proof that the government expected nothing more from its navy than a few isolated exploits, that could produce no great influence on the main results of the contest, that the force the country actually possessed was not collected, and ordered to act in a body, during the short period that it would possess the advantage of assailing the enemy, while the latter was ignorant of the existence of hostilities. A squadron of three twenty-four-pounder frigates, of as many eighteen-pounder vessels of the same class, and of eight or ten smaller cruisers, all effective, well manned, and admirably officered, might have been assembled, with a due attention to preparation. The enemy had but one two-decker, an old 64, on the American coast; and the force just mentioned was quite sufficient to have blockaded both Halifax and Bermuda, for a month; or until the English received the intelligence of the war, and had time to reinforce from the West Indies. It has been said, that several hundred homeward-bound American vessels were at sea, at that moment, and in the event of a few straggling cruisers of the enemy's making prizes on the coast, there would have been no port at hand, into which they could have been sent, and a large proportion would probably have been recaptured by the American privateers that immediately covered the adjacent seas. Had the British cruisers collected, as indeed they did, under the im

pression that some such policy would be pursued, it would have been easy to destroy them, or at least to drive them into port, when the same end would have been obtained in a different form.

But the declaration of war did not find the little marine of America in a condition to act in this combined, intelligent, and military manner. The vessels were scattered; some were undergoing repairs, others were at a distance; and with the exception of one small squadron, every thing was virtually committed to the activity, judgment, and enterprise of the different captains. In the port of New York, were collected the *President* 44, Commodore Rodgers; *Essex* 32, Captain Porter; and *Hornet* 18, Captain Lawrence. These vessels were ready to sail at an hour's notice, except the *Essex*, which ship was overhauling her rigging, and restowing her hold. Commodore Rodgers had dropped into the bay, with the *President* and *Hornet*, where he was joined by the *United States* 44, Commodore Decatur, *Congress* 38, Captain Smith, and *Argus* 16, Lieutenant Commandant Sinclair, all of which vessels arrived from the southward on the 21st of June.

Information had been received of the sailing of a large fleet of Jamaica-men, under protection of a strong force; and as these vessels would naturally be sweeping along the American coast, in the gulf stream, it was determined to make a dash at this convoy,—as judicious a plan, under the circumstances, as could then have been adopted. Within an hour after he had received official information of the declaration of war, together with his orders, Commodore Rodgers was under way.

The squadron passed Sandy Hook on the afternoon of the 21st of June, and ran off south-east. That night an American was spoken that had seen the Jamaica ships, and sail was instantly crowded in pursuit. On the 23d, however, at 6 A. M., a vessel was seen to the northward and eastward, which was soon made out to be an enemy's frigate, and a general chase took place. The wind was fresh for the greater part of the day, and the enemy standing before it, the *President*, an uncommonly fast ship off the wind, soon gained, not only on the stranger, but on the rest of the squadron. About 4 P. M., she was within gun-shot of the chase, but the wind had unfortunately fallen, and the American ships being just out of port, and deep, their greater comparative weight, under such circumstances, gave the enemy an advantage. Perceiving but very faint hopes of getting alongside of the stranger, unless he could be crippled, Commodore Rodgers determined now to open on him, with his chase-guns. With this view, that officer went forward, himself, to direct the cannonade, and about half past 4, the fore-castle gun was discharged. This was the first hostile shot fired afloat in the war of 1812, and the gun is understood to have been pointed by Commodore Rodgers in person.* The shot struck the chase in the rudder-coat, and drove through the stern frame into the gun-room. The next gun was fired from the first division below, and was pointed and discharged by Mr. Gamble,

*As all the guns, at that time, went with locks, it is also probable that he pulled the lanyard.

the second lieutenant, who commanded the battery. The shot struck the muzzle of one of the enemy's stern chasers, which it damaged. Commodore Rodgers fired the third shot, which struck the stern of the chase, killed two men, badly wounded two more, and slightly wounded a lieutenant and two others. Mr. Gamble again fired, when the gun bursted. The shot flew broad off on the President's bow, and the explosion killed and wounded sixteen men. The fore-castle deck was blown up, and Commodore Rodgers was thrown into the air, breaking a leg by the fall. The accident prevented the guns of that side from being used for some time. The pause enabled the enemy to open from four stern guns, otherwise he would have soon been driven from the after part of his ship. The fire of the chase was spirited and good, one of his shot plunging on the President's deck, killing a midshipman, and one or two men. The President shortly after began to yaw, with a view to cut away some of the chase's spars, and her fire soon compelled the latter to lighten. The enemy cut away his anchors, stove his boats and threw them over-board, and started fourteen tons of water. By these means he drew ahead, when about 7 o'clock the President hauled up, and as a last resort, fired three broadsides, most of the shot of which fell short.

Finding it impossible to get any nearer to the enemy, without rendering his own ship inefficient for a cruise, by lightening, Commodore Rodgers ordered the pursuit to be finally abandoned, about midnight. It was afterwards known, that the vessel chased was the *Belvidera* 36, Captain Byron, who deservedly gained much credit for the active manner in which he saved his ship. The *Belvidera* got into Halifax a few days later, carrying with her the news of the declaration of war. The President had twenty-two men killed and wounded on this occasion, sixteen of whom suffered by the bursting of the gun. Among the former, was the midshipman mentioned; and among the latter, Mr. Gamble. The loss of the *Belvidera* was stated at seven killed and wounded by shot, and several others by accidents, Captain Byron included. She also suffered materially in her spars, sails, and rigging; while the injuries of this nature, received by the President, were not serious.

The squadron now hauled up to its course, in pursuit of the Jamaica-men; and, from time to time, intelligence was obtained from American vessels, of the course the fleet was steering. On the 1st of July, the pursuing ships fell in with large quantities of the shells of cocoa-nuts, orange-peels, &c. &c., which gave an assurance that they had struck the wake of the Englishmen. This was a little to the eastward of the Banks of Newfoundland, and the strongest hopes were entertained of coming up with the fleet before it could reach the channel. On the 9th of July, an English letter of marque was captured by the *Hornet*, Captain Lawrence, and her master reported that he had seen the Jamaica vessels the previous evening, under the convoy of a two-decked ship, a frigate, a sloop of war, and a brig. He had counted eighty-five sail. All possible means were now used to force the squadron ahead, but without success, no further information having been received of the fleet. The chase was

continued until the 13th, when, being within a day's run of the chops of the channel, Commodore Rodgers stood to the southward, passing Madeira, and going into Boston by the way of the Western Islands and the Grand Banks.

This cruise was singularly unfortunate, for such a moment, although the ships were kept in the direct tracks of vessels in crossing the ocean, each time. Seven merchantmen were taken, however, and one American was recaptured. The squadron was absent on this service seventy days.

The report of the *Belvidera* induced the enemy to collect as many of his vessels in squadron, as possible; and a force consisting of the *Africa* 64, Captain Bastard; *Shannon* 38, Captain Broke; *Guerriere* 38, Captain Dacres; *Belvidera* 36, Captain Byron; and *Æolus* 32, Captain Lord James Townsend, was soon united, in the hope of falling in with Commodore Rodgers. Of this squadron, Captain Broke, of the *Shannon*, was the senior officer. It appeared off New York early in July, where it made several captures. The *Nautilus* 14, Lieutenant Commandant Crane, had arrived in the port of New York, shortly after the squadron of Commodore Rodgers sailed; and this little brig went out, with an intention of cruising in the track of the English Indiamen, at the unfortunate moment when Commodore Broke appeared off the coast. The *Nautilus* got to sea quite early in July, and fell in with the British squadron the next day. A short, but vigorous chase succeeded, in which Mr. Crane threw overboard his lee-guns, and did all that a seaman could devise to escape, but the *Nautilus* buried, while the frigates of the enemy were enabled to carry every thing to advantage, and he struck to the *Shannon*. The *Nautilus* was the first vessel of war taken on either side, in this contest, and thus the service lost one of those cruisers, which had become endeared to it, and identified with its history, in connexion with the war before Tripoli.* The enemy took out the officers and people of their prize, threw a crew into her, and continued to cruise in the hope of meeting the American ships. Leaving them thus employed, it will now be necessary to return to port, in quest of another cruiser to occupy their attention.

The *Constitution* 44, Captain Hull, had gone into the Chesapeake, on her return from Europe, and, shipping a new crew, on the 12th of July she sailed from Annapolis, and stood to the northward. So rapidly was her equipment procured, that her first lieutenant joined her only a fortnight before she sailed, and a draft of a hundred men was received on the evening of the 11th. Friday, July the 17th, the ship was out of sight of land, though at no great distance from the coast, with a light breeze from the N. E., and under easy canvass. At 1, she sounded in 22 fathoms; and about an hour afterwards, four sail were made in the northern board, heading to the westward. At 3, the *Constitution* made sail, and tacked in 18½ fathoms. At 4, she discovered a fifth sail to the northward and eastward, which had

*The *Enterprise*, *Nautilus*, and *Vixen*, were originally schooners, but they had all been rigged into brigs, previously to the war of 1812. The *Nautilus*, it will be remembered was the vessel commanded by the regretted and chivalrous Somers.

the appearance of a vessel of war. This ship subsequently proved to be the *Guerriere* 38, Captain Dacres. By this time, the other four sail were made out to be three ships and a brig; they bore N. N. W., and were all on the starboard tack, apparently in company. The wind now became very light, and the *Constitution* hauled up her main-sail. The ship in the eastern board, however, had so far altered her position by 6, as to bear E. N. E., the wind having hitherto been fair for her to close. But at a quarter past 6, the wind came out light at the southward, bringing the American ship to windward. The *Constitution* now wore round with her head to the eastward, set her light studding-sails and stay-sails, and at half past 7, beat to quarters, and cleared for action, with the intention of speaking the nearest vessel.

The wind continued very light at the southward, and the two vessels were slowly closing until 8. At 10, the *Constitution* shortened sail, and immediately after she showed the private signal of the day. After keeping the lights aloft near an hour, and getting no answer from the *Guerriere*, the *Constitution*, at a quarter past 11, lowered the signal, and made sail again, hauling aboard her starboard tacks. During the whole of the middle watch the wind was very light, from the southward and westward. Just as the morning watch was called, the *Guerriere* tacked, then wore entirely round, threw a rocket, and fired two guns. At the same time three sail were discovered on the starboard quarter of the *Constitution*, and three more astern. At 5 A. M., a fourth vessel was seen astern.

This was the squadron of Commodore Broke, which had been gradually closing with the American frigate during the night, and was now just out of gun-shot. As the ships slowly varied their positions, when the mists were entirely cleared away, the *Constitution* had two frigates on her lee quarter, and a ship of the line, two frigates, a brig and a schooner astern. The names of the enemy's ships have already been given; but the brig was the *Nautilus*, and the schooner another prize. All the strangers had English colours flying.

It now fell quite calm, and the *Constitution* hoisted out her boats, and sent them ahead to tow, with a view to keep the ship out of the reach of the enemy's shot. At the same time, she whipt up one of the gun-deck guns to the spar-deck, and run it out aft, as a stern chaser, getting a long eighteen off the fore-castle also for a similar purpose. Two more of the twenty-fours below were run out at the cabin windows, with the same object. It was found necessary to cut away some of the taffrail, in order to make room.

By 6 o'clock the wind, which continued very light and baffling, came out from the northward of west, when the ship's head was got round to the southward, and all the light canvass that would draw was set. Soon after, the nearest frigate, the *Shannon*, opened with her bow guns, and continued firing for about ten minutes, but perceiving she could not reach the *Constitution*, she ceased. At half past 6, Captain Hull sounded in 26 fathoms, when finding that the enemy was likely to close, as he was enabled to put the boats of two ships on

one, and was also favoured by a little more air than the *Constitution*, all the spare rope that could be found, and which was fit for the purpose, was payed down into the cutters, bent on, and a kedge was run out near a mile ahead, and let go. At a signal given, the crew clapped on, and walked away with the ship, overrunning and tripping the kedge as she came up with the end of the line. When this was done, another kedge was carried ahead, and, though out of sight of land the frigate glided away from her pursuers, before they discovered the manner in which it was done. At half past 7, the *Constitution* had a little air, when she set her ensign, and fired a shot at the *Shannon*, the nearest ship astern. At 8, it fell calm again, and further recourse was had to the boats and the kedges, the enemy's vessels having a light air, and drawing ahead, towing and sweeping. By 9, the nearest frigate, the *Shannon*, on which the English had put most of their boats, was closing fast, and there was every prospect, notwithstanding the steadiness and activity of the *Constitution*'s people, that the frigate just mentioned would get near enough to cripple her, when her capture by the rest of the squadron would be inevitable. At this trying moment the best spirit prevailed in the ship. Every thing was stoppered, and Captain Hull was not without hopes, even should he be forced into action, of throwing the *Shannon* astern by his fire, and of maintaining his distance from the other vessels. It was known that the enemy could not tow very near, as it would have been easy to sink his boats with the stern guns of the *Constitution*, and not a man in the latter vessel showed a disposition to despondency. Officers and men relieved each other regularly at the duty, and while the former threw themselves down on deck to catch short naps, the people slept at their guns.

This was one of the most critical moments of the chase. The *Shannon* was fast closing, as has been just stated, while the *Guerriere* was almost as near on the starboard quarter. An hour promised to bring the struggle to an issue, when suddenly, at 9 minutes past 9, a light air from the southward struck the ship, bringing her to windward. The beautiful manner in which this advantage was improved, excited admiration even in the enemy. As the breeze was seen coming, the ship's sails were trimmed, and as soon as she was under command, she was brought close up to the wind, on the larboard tack; the boats were all dropped in alongside; those that belonged to the davits were run up, while the others were just lifted clear of the water, by purchases on the spare outboard spars, where they were in readiness to be used at a moment's notice. As the ship came by the wind, she brought the *Guerriere* nearly on her lee beam, when that frigate opened a fire from her broadside. While the shot of this vessel were just falling short of them, the people of the *Constitution* were hoisting up their boats with as much steadiness as if the duty was performing in a friendly port. In about an hour, however, it fell nearly calm again, when captain Hull ordered a quantity of the water started, to lighten the ship. More than two thousand gallon*

were pumped out, and the boats were sent ahead again to tow. The enemy now put nearly all his boats on the Shannon, the nearest ship astern; and a few hours of prodigious exertion followed, the people of the Constitution being compelled to supply the place of numbers by their activity and zeal. The ships were close by the wind, and every thing that would draw was set, and the Shannon was slowly, but steadily, forging ahead. About noon of this day, there was a little relaxation from labour, owing to the occasional occurrence of cat's-paws, by watching which closely, the ship was urged through the water. But at quarter past 12, the boats were again sent ahead, and the toilsome work of towing was renewed.

At 1 o'clock a strange sail was discovered nearly to leeward. At this moment the four frigates of the enemy were about one point on the lee-quarter of the Constitution, at long gun-shot, the Africa and the two prizes being on the lee-beam. As the wind was constantly baffling, any moment might have brought a change, and placed the enemy to windward. At seven minutes before two, the Belvidera, then the nearest ship, began to fire with her bow guns, and the Constitution opened with her stern chasers. On board the latter ship, however, it was soon found to be dangerous to use the main-deck guns, the transoms having so much rake, the windows being so high, and the guns so short, that every explosion lifted the upper deck, and threatened to blow out the stern frame. Perceiving, moreover, that his shot did little or no execution, Captain Hull ordered the firing to cease at half past 2.

For several hours, the enemy's frigates were now within gun-shot, sometimes towing and kedging, and at others endeavouring to close with the puffs of air that occasionally passed. At 7 in the evening, the boats of the Constitution were again ahead, the ship steering S. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W., with an air so light as to be almost imperceptible. At half past 7, she sounded in 24 fathoms. For hours, the same toilsome duty was going on, until a little before 11, when a light air from the southward struck the ship, and the sails for the first time in many weary hours were asleep. The boats instantly dropped alongside, hooked on, and were all run up. The topgallant studding-sails and stay-sails were set as soon as possible, and for about an hour, the people caught a little rest.

But at midnight it fell nearly calm again, though neither the pursuers nor the pursued had recourse to the boats, probably from an unwillingness to disturb their crews. At 2 A.M., it was observed on board the Constitution that the Guerriere had forged ahead, and was again off their lee beam. At this time, the top-gallant studding-sails were taken in.

In this manner passed the night, and on the morning of the next day, it was found that three of the enemy's frigates were within long gun-shot on the lee-quarter, and the other at about the same distance on the lee-beam. The Africa, and the prizes were much further to leeward.

A little after daylight, the Belvidera, having drawn ahead sufficiently to be forward of the Constitution's beam, tacked, when the

latter ship did the same, in order to preserve her position to windward. An hour later the *Æolus* passed on the contrary tack, so near that it was thought by some who observed the movement, that she ought to have opened her fire; but, as that vessel was merely a twelve-pounder frigate, and she was still at a considerable distance, it is quite probable her commander acted judiciously. By this time, there was sufficient wind to induce Captain Hull to hoist in his first cutter.

The scene, on the morning of this day, was very beautiful, and of great interest to the lovers of nautical exhibitions. The weather was mild and lovely, the sea smooth as a pond, and there was quite wind enough to remove the necessity of any of the extraordinary means of getting ahead, that had been so freely used during the previous eight-and-forty hours. All the English vessels had got on the same tack with the *Constitution* again, and the five frigates were clouds of canvass, from their trucks to the water. Including the American ship, eleven sail were in sight, and shortly after a twelfth appeared to windward, that was soon ascertained to be an American merchantman. But the enemy were too intent on the *Constitution* to regard any thing else, and though it would have been easy to capture the ships to leeward, no attention appears to have been paid to them. With a view, however, to deceive the ship to windward they hoisted American colours, when the *Constitution* set an English ensign, by way of warning the stranger to keep aloof.

Until 10 o'clock the *Constitution* was making every preparation for carrying sail hard should it become necessary, and she sounded in 25 fathoms. At noon the wind fell again, though it was found that while the breeze lasted, she had gained on all the enemy's ships; more, however on some, than on others. The nearest vessel was the *Belvidera*, which was exactly in the wake of the *Constitution*, distant about two and a half miles, bearing W. N. W. The nearest frigate to leeward, bore N. by W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. distant three or three and a half miles; the two other frigates were on the lee-quarter, distant about five miles, and the *Africa* was hull down to leeward, on the opposite tack.

This was a vast improvement on the state of things that had existed the day previous, and it allowed the officers and men to catch a little rest, though no one left the decks. The latitude by observation this day, was $38^{\circ} 47' N.$, and the longitude by dead reckoning $73^{\circ} 57' W.$

At meridian the wind began to blow a pleasant breeze, and the sound of the water rippling under the bows of the vessel was again heard. From this moment the noble old ship slowly drew ahead of all her pursuers, the sails being watched and tended in the best manner that consummate seamanship could dictate, until 4, P. M., when the *Belvidera* was more than four miles astern, and the other vessels were thrown behind in the same proportion, though the wind had again got to be very light.

In this manner both parties kept passing ahead and to windward, as fast as circumstances would allow, profiting by every change, and

resorting to all the means of forcing vessels through the water, that are known to seamen. At a little before 7, however, there was every appearance of a heavy squall, accompanied by rain; when the *Constitution* prepared to meet it with the coolness and discretion she had displayed throughout the whole affair. The people were stationed, and every thing was kept fast to the last moment, when, just before the squall struck the ship, the order was given to clew up and clew down. All the light canvass was furled, a second reef was taken in the mizen topsail, and the ship was brought under short sail, in an incredibly little time. The English vessels, observing this, began to let go and haul down without waiting for the wind, and when they were shut in by the rain, they were steering in different directions to avoid the force of the expected squall. The *Constitution*, on the other hand, no sooner got its weight, than she sheeted home and hoisted her fore and main-topgallant sails, and while the enemy most probably believed her to be borne down by the pressure of the wind, steering free, she was flying away from them, on an easy bowline, at the rate of eleven knots.

In a little less than an hour after the squall struck the ship, it had entirely passed to leeward, and a sight was again obtained of the enemy. The *Belvidera*, the nearest vessel, had altered her bearings in that short period two points more to leeward, and she was a long way astern. The next nearest vessel was still farther to leeward, and more distant, while the two remaining frigates were fairly hull down. The *Africa* was barely visible in the horizon!

All apprehensions of the enemy now ceased, though sail was carried to increase the distance, and to preserve the weather gage. At half past 10 the wind backed further to the southward, when the *Constitution*, which had been steering free for some time, took in her lower studding-sails. At 11 the enemy fired two guns, and the nearest ship could just be discovered. As the wind baffled, and continued light, the enemy still persevered in the chase, but at daylight the nearest vessel was hull down astern and to leeward. Under the circumstances it was deemed prudent to use every exertion to lose sight of the English frigates; and the wind falling light, the *Constitution's* sails were wet down from the skysails to the courses. The good effects of this care were soon visible, as at 6 A. M. the topsails of the enemy's nearest vessels were beginning to dip. At a quarter past 8, the English ships all hauled to the northward and eastward, fully satisfied, by a trial that had lasted nearly three days and as many nights, under all the circumstances that can attend naval manœuvres, from reefed topsails to kedging, that they had no hope of overtaking their enemy.

Thus terminated a chase, that has become historical in the American navy, for its length, closeness, and activity. On the part of the English, there were manifested much perseverance and seamanship, a ready imitation, and a strong desire to get alongside of their enemy. But the glory of the affair was carried off by the officers and people of the *Constitution*. Throughout all the trying circumstances of this arduous struggle, this noble frigate, which had so

lately been the subject of the sneers of the English critics, maintained the high character of a man-of-war. Even when pressed upon the hardest, nothing was hurried, confused, or slovenly, but the utmost steadiness, order, and discipline reigned in the ship. A cool, discreet, and gallant commander, was nobly sustained by his officers; and there cannot be a doubt that had the enemy succeeded in getting any one of their frigates fairly under the fire of the American ship, that she would have been very roughly treated. The escape itself, is not so much a matter of admiration, as the manner in which it was effected. A little water was pumped out, it is true; and perhaps this was necessary, in order to put a vessel fresh from port on a level, in light winds and calms, with ships that had been cruising some time; but not an anchor was cut away, not a boat stove, nor a gun lost. The steady and man-of-war like style in which the Constitution took in all her boats, as occasions offered; the order and rapidity with which she kedged, and the vigilant seamanship with which she was braced up, and eased off, extorted admiration among the more liberal of her pursuers. In this affair, the ship, no less than those who worked her, gained a high reputation, if not with the world generally, at least with those who, perhaps, as seldom err in their nautical criticisms as any people living.

The English relinquished the pursuit at 8 A. M., and at half past 8 the Constitution, discovering a vessel on her starboard bow, made sail in chase. At three quarters past 9 brought to, and spoke an American brig. At 10 made sail again in chase of another vessel on the lee bow, which also proved to be an American, bound in. At meridian hoisted in the boat used in boarding, took a second reef in the topsails, and stood to the eastward, the ship going into Boston near the middle of the same month.

A few days after the chase of the Constitution, the English squadron separated, the Africa returning to port with the prisoners and prizes, and the frigates shaping their courses in different directions, in the hope that the ship which had avoided them so carefully when in company, might be less averse to meeting either singly.

The Essex 32, Captain Porter, got to sea from New York, not long after the departure of Commodore Rodgers, and went first to the southward. She made several prizes early, destroying most of them, and receiving the prisoners on board. The weather now compelled the Essex to run to the northward. When a few weeks from port, a small fleet was approached at night, which was immediately understood to be enemies. The English ships were steering to the northward, before the wind, and the Essex was stretching towards them, on an easy bowline, and under short canvass. The night had a dull moon, and it wanted but an hour or two to daylight. As the Essex drew near, it was perceived that the English were sailing in very open order, with considerable intervals between them, and that the conveying ship, a large vessel, was some distance ahead, and of course to leeward.

As it was the intention of Captain Porter to preserve the weather gage, until he ascertained who and what the convoy might be, he

stretched in towards the sternmost ship of the strangers, which he spoke. At this time, the people of the Essex were at their guns, with every thing ready to engage, but keeping the men on deck concealed, and having the lower ports in. After some conversation with the first vessel, it was ascertained that the fleet consisted of a few transports, under the convoy of a frigate and bomb-vessel, when Captain Porter determined to get alongside of the former, if possible, and to carry her by surprise. With this view, the Essex shot ahead, leaving the first vessel, apparently, without exciting her suspicions. On ranging up close abeam of a second, some further discourse passed, when the Englishman so far took the alarm, as to announce an intention to make the signal of a stranger's having joined the fleet. It became necessary, therefore, to throw aside disguise, and to order the transport to haul out of the convoy, under the penalty of being fired into. This was done quietly, and seemingly without attracting the attention of the rest of the fleet, which, of course, passed to leeward. On taking possession of her prize, the Essex found her filled with soldiers, and so much time was necessarily consumed in securing the latter, that the day dawned, and it became inexpedient to renew the attempt on the convoy. The frigate was said to be the *Minerva* 36, and the troops in the convoy amounted to near 1000 men. About 150 were taken in the prize.

A few days after this success, the Essex made a strange sail to windward. At the moment, the frigate was disguised as a merchantman, having her gun-deck ports in, top-gallant masts housed, and sails trimmed in a slovenly manner. Deceived by these appearances, the stranger came running down free, when the American ship showed her ensign and kept away, under short sail. This emboldened the stranger, who followed, and having got on the weather quarter of his chase, he began his fire, setting English colours. The Essex now knocked out her ports, and opened upon the enemy, who appears to have been so much taken by surprise, that after receiving one or two discharges, his people deserted their quarters, and ran below. In eight minutes after the Essex had begun to fire, the English ship struck. On sending Lieutenant Finch* on board to take possession, the prize proved to be his Britannic Majesty's ship *Alert*, Captain Laughtarne, mounting 20 eighteen-pound carronades, and with a full crew. Mr. Finch found seven feet of water in the *Alert*, and was obliged to ware round, to keep her from sinking.

The *Alert* was the first vessel of war taken from the English in this contest, and her resistance was so feeble as to excite surprise. It was not to be expected, certainly, that a ship carrying eighteen-pound carronades, could successfully resist a ship carrying thirty-two-pound carronades, and double her number of guns and men; but so exaggerated had become the opinion of the British prowess on the ocean, that impossibilities were sometimes looked for. As it is understood that only a part of the Essex's guns bore on the *Alert*, the

*Since Captain Bolton.

manner in which the latter was taken, must be attributed to a sudden panic among her people some of whom were censured after their exchange. One or two of the officers even, did not escape, the first lieutenant having been dismissed the service, by a court-martial. The *Alert* had but three men wounded, and the *Essex* sustained no injury at all.

Captain Porter, with the addition made by the crew of the *Alert*, had many prisoners, and as he was apprised of their intention to rise, in the event of an engagement, he felt the necessity of getting rid of them. He accordingly entered into an arrangement with Captain Laugharne, to convert the *Alert*, which was a large ship bought for the service, into a cartel, and to send her into St. John's. This project, so favourable to the American interests, was successfully accomplished; and it is due to his character to say, that the officer in command at Newfoundland, Admiral Sir J. T. Duckworth, while he protested against the course, as unusual and injurious to a nation like England, which had so many cruisers at sea, by depriving her of the chances of recapture, honourably complied with the conditions entered into by his inferior.

The *Essex* continued to cruise to the southward of the Grand Banks. On two occasions, she fell in with enemy's frigates, and at one time was so hard pressed, as to be reduced to the necessity of making every preparation to carry one by boarding in the night, since, another English vessel of war being in company, an engagement in the usual manner would have been indiscreet. The arrangements made on board the *Essex*, on this occasion, are still spoken of with admiration, by those who were in the ship, and there is great reason to think they would have succeeded, had the vessels met. By some accident, that has never been explained, the ships passed each other in the darkness, and shortly after, the *Essex* came into the Delaware to replenish her water and stores.

In the meanwhile, the *Constitution* was not idle. Remaining at Boston a short time after his celebrated chase, Captain Hull sailed again on the 2d of August, standing along the land to the eastward, in the hope of falling in with some of the enemy's cruisers, that were thought to be hovering on the coast. The ship ran down, near the land, as far as the Bay of Fundy, without seeing any thing, when she went off Halifax and Cape Sable, with the same want of success. Captain Hull now determined to go farther east, and he went near the Isle of Sables, and thence to the mouth of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, to intercept vessels bound to Halifax or Quebec. Here two prizes, of little value, were taken and burned. On the morning of the 15th, five sail were made, one of which was a sloop of war. The *Constitution* gave chase, and the enemy soon set one of his vessels, a prize brig, on fire. The chases now separated, and the sloop of war being to windward, the *Constitution* followed a ship, which turned out to be an Englishman, already a prize to an American privateer. This vessel had been spoken by the sloop of war, but the appearance of the *Constitution* prevented her recapture. A brig was next chased to leeward, and proved to be an American, with a prize crew on

board. She was retaken, and sent in. The remainder of the vessels escaped.

The Constitution next stood to the southward, and on the 19th, at 2 P. M., in lat. $41^{\circ} 41'$, long. $55^{\circ} 48'$, a sail was made from the mast-heads, bearing E. S. E., and to leeward, though the distance prevented her character from being discovered. The Constitution immediately made sail in chase, and at 3, the stranger was ascertained to be a ship on the starboard tack, under easy canvass, and close hauled. Half an hour later, she was distinctly made out to be a frigate, and no doubt was entertained of her being an enemy. The American ship kept running free until she was within a league of the frigate to leeward, when she began to shorten sail. By this time, the enemy had laid his main-topsail aback, in waiting for the Constitution to come down, with every thing ready to engage. Perceiving that the Englishman sought a combat, Captain Hull made his own preparations with the greater deliberation. The Constitution, consequently furled her topgallant-sails, and stowed all her light stay-sails and flying jib. Soon after, she took a second reef in the topsails, hauled up the courses, sent down royal yards, cleared for action, and beat to quarters. At 5, the chase hoisted three English ensigns, and immediately after she opened her fire, at long gun-shot, waring several times, to rake and prevent being raked. The Constitution occasionally yawed as she approached, to avoid being raked, and she fired a few guns as they bore, but her object was not to commence the action seriously, until quite close.

At 6 o'clock, the enemy bore up and ran off, under his three topsails and jib, with the wind on his quarter. As this was an indication of a readiness to receive his antagonist, in a fair yard-arm and yard-arm fight, the Constitution immediately set her main-topgallant-sail and foresail, to get alongside. At a little after 6, the bows of the American frigate began to double on the quarter of the English ship, when she opened with her forward guns, drawing slowly ahead, with her greater way, both vessels keeping up a close and heavy fire, as their guns bore. In about ten minutes, or just as the ships were fairly side by side, the mizen-mast of the Englishman was shot away, when the American passed slowly ahead, keeping up a tremendous fire, and luffed short round on her bows, to prevent being raked. In executing this manœuvre, the ship shot into the wind, got sternway, and fell foul of her antagonist. While in this situation, the cabin of the Constitution took fire from the close explosion of the forward guns of the enemy, who obtained a small, but momentary advantage from his position. The good conduct of Mr. Hoffman,* who commanded in the cabin, soon repaired this accident, and a gun of the enemy's that threatened further injury, was disabled.

As the vessels touched, both parties prepared to board. The English turned all hands up from below, and mustered forward, with that object, while Mr. Morris, the first lieutenant, with his own hands endeavoured to lash the ships together. Mr. Aylwin, the mas-

*Beekman Verplanck Hoffman, the fourth lieutenant of the Constitution, a gentleman of New York, who died in 1834, a captain.

ter, and Mr. Bush, the lieutenant of marines, were upon the taffrail of the Constitution, to be ready to spring. Both sides now suffered by the closeness of the musketry; the English much the most, however. Mr. Morris was shot through the body, the bullet fortunately missing the vitals. Mr. Aylwin was wounded in the shoulder, and Mr. Bush fell dead by a bullet through the head. It being found impossible for either party to board, in the face of such a fire, and with the heavy sea that was on, the sails were filled, and just as the Constitution shot ahead, the foremast of the enemy fell, carrying down with it his mainmast, and leaving him wallowing in the trough of the sea, a helpless wreck.

The Constitution now hauled aboard her tacks, ran off a short distance, secured her masts, and rove new rigging. At 7, she wore round, and taking a favourable position for raking, a jack that had been kept flying on the stump of the mizen-mast of the enemy, was lowered. Mr. George Campbell Read,* the third lieutenant, was sent on board the prize, and the boat soon returned with the report that the captured vessel was the *Guerriere* 38, Captain Dacres, one of the ships that had so lately chased the Constitution, off New York.

The Constitution kept waring to remain near her prize, and at 2 A. M., a strange sail was seen closing, when she cleared for action; but at three, the stranger stood off. At daylight the officer in charge hailed to say that the *Guerriere* had four feet water in her hold, and that there was danger of her sinking. On receiving this information, Captain Hull sent all his boats to remove the prisoners. Fortunately, the weather was moderate, and by noon this duty was nearly ended. At 3 P. M., the prize crew was recalled, having set the wreck on fire, and in a quarter of an hour, she blew up. Finding himself filled with wounded prisoners, Captain Hull now returned to Boston, where he arrived on the 30th of the same month.

It is not easy, at this distant day, to convey to the reader the full force of the moral impression created in America by this victory of one frigate over another. So deep had been the effect produced on the public mind by the constant accounts of the successes of the English over their enemies at sea, that the opinion, already mentioned, of their invincibility on that element, generally prevailed; and it had been publicly predicted that, before the contest had continued six months, British sloops of war would lie alongside of American frigates with comparative impunity. Perhaps the only portion of even the American population that expected different results was that which composed the little body of officers on whom the trial would fall, and they looked forward to the struggle with a manly resolution, rather than with a very confident hope.† But the termina-

*Since Commodore Read.

† About two months before war was declared, the officers of two of the frigates passed an evening together, when the subject of what would be the probable result of a conflict between American and English ships, was seriously and temperately discussed. The conclusion was, that, in the judgment of these gentlemen, at that interesting moment, their own chances of victory were *at least* equal to those of the enemy. On the other hand, General Moreau, when witnessing the evolutions of some American ships in port, about the same time, after expressing his admiration of their appearance, gave an opinion that it was impossible men so inexperienced should prevail over an English vessel.

tion of the combat just related, far exceeded the expectations of even the most sanguine. After making all proper allowance for the difference of force, which certainly existed in favour of the Constitution, as well as for the excuses that the defeated party freely offered to the world, men on both sides of the Atlantic, who were competent to form intelligent opinions on such subjects, saw the promise of many future successes in this. The style in which the Constitution had been handled; the deliberate and yet earnest manner in which she had been carried into battle; the extraordinary execution that had been made in a short time by her fire; the readiness and gallantry with which she had cleared for action, so soon after destroying one British frigate, in which was manifested a disposition to meet another, united to produce a deep conviction of self-reliance, coolness, and skill, that was of infinitely more weight than the transient feeling which might result from any accidental triumph.

In this combat, the Constitution suffered a good deal in her rigging and sails, but very little in her hull. Her loss was seven killed, and seven wounded. As soon as she had rove new rigging, applied the necessary stoppers, and bent a few sails, as has been seen, she was ready to engage another frigate. On the other hand, the *Guerriere* was completely dismasted, had seventy-nine men killed and wounded, and, according to the statement of her commander in his defence, before the court which tried him for the loss of his ship, she had received no less than thirty shot as low as five sheets of copper beneath the bends! All this execution had been done between the time when the ships opened their fire abeam, and the moment when the *Guerriere's* masts fell; for the few shot thrown by the Constitution, previously to the first event, were virtually of no use, and, subsequently to the last, she did not discharge a gun. The whole period, between the time when the *Guerriere* commenced her fire at long shot, and that when she actually hauled down her jack, something like two hours, was included in the enemy's accounts of the duration of the combat; but it is well understood by professional men, that in truth, the battle was decided in about a fourth of that time.

It was natural that a success so brilliant and unexpected should produce a reaction in public feeling; and in dwelling on their victory, exaggerated and vainglorious boastings mingled in the exultation of the American journals of the period, while illiberal and fraudulent detraction made up the accounts of a portion of the English writers, when apologising for the defeat. As is usual, on such occasions, each side endeavoured to make the most of circumstances; and it is the province of the historian to correct, as far as it is in his power, these misrepresentations and mistakes. That the Constitution was a larger and a heavier ship than the *Guerriere*, will be disputed by no nautical man, though it is believed that the actual difference between these vessels was considerably less than might be inferred from their respective rates. It is understood that the *Guerriere* was nearly as long a ship as her adversary, and it has been asserted on respectable authority, that she was actually pierced for 54 guns, though it is admitted that she had but 49 mounted in the

action, one of which was a light boat-carronade.* Her gun-deck metal was eighteen-pounders, and her carronades, like those of the *Constitution*, were thirty-twos. The *Guerriere* was a French-built ship, but we have no means of ascertaining whether her guns were, or were not, French eighteens. If the latter, her shot of this denomination would have weighed near nineteen and a half pounds, while, at that period, it is believed that the twenty-four pound shot of America seldom much exceeded twenty-two pounds. Some experiments made at that time, are said to have shown that the difference between the metal of these two ships was much less than would have appeared from the nominal power of their guns.† The great inferiority of the *Guerriere*, certainly, was in her men. Captain Dacres, whose authority on this point there is no reason to question, says that he mustered but 263 souls at quarters, in consequence of the absence of one lieutenant, two midshipmen, and a part of his people, in prizes. He also admits the important fact that there were several Americans among his crew, who refused to fight, and, much to his credit, he permitted them to go below. This number has been stated at ten, in other British accounts.

After making every allowance that was claimed by the enemy, the character of this victory is not essentially altered. Its peculiarities were a fine display of seamanship in the approach, extraordinary efficiency in the attack, and great readiness in repairing damages; all of which denote cool and capable officers, with an expert and trained crew; in a word, a disciplined man-of-war.‡ Observant men compared the injury done to the *Guerriere* in thirty minutes, and part of that time with the ships foul, in a situation that compelled the *Constitution* to withhold her fire, with that done to the Chesapeake, an unresisting vessel, in twelve minutes; the first, too, occurring in rough, and the last in smooth water, with every advantage of position. While the mass of the nation perceived that the notion of British invincibility was absurd, and, perhaps, began to expect impossibilities, this portion of the observers, with justice, foresaw that America had only to put forth her power in earnest, to assert the freedom of the seas in a manner to command respect.

Captain Dacres lost no professional reputation by his defeat. He had handled his ship in a manner to win the applause of his enemies, fought her gallantly, and only submitted when further resistance

* It is stated on authority deemed worthy of credit, that the *Guerriere* was pierced for thirty guns on the gun-deck, but that she had no bridle-port, below. Five ports that could have been fought in broadside, are said to have been empty on board the *Guerriere*, when the Americans took possession.

† An officer of the *Constitution*, of experience and of great respectability, who is now dead, assured the writer that he actually weighed the shot of both ships, and found that the *Constitution's* twenty-fours were only three pounds heavier than the *Guerriere's* eighteens, and that there was nearly the same difference in favour of the latter's thirty-twos. The writer has elsewhere given the result of his own investigations, on this subject, made, however, some years after the war. He never found an English shot overweight, though most of the American shot fell short.

‡ Whatever may have been its conduct, and it was excellent in the chase and in the engagement, the crew of the *Constitution* was actually new, her men having been shipped just before the war.

would have been as culpable as, in fact, it was impossible. Less can be said in favour of the efficiency of the *Guerriere's* batteries, which were not equal to the mode of fighting that had been introduced by her antagonist, and which, in fact, was the commencement of a new era in combats between single ships.

We have dwelt at length on the circumstances connected with this action, not only because it was the first serious conflict of the war, but because it was characterised by features which, though novel at the time, became identified with nearly all the subsequent engagements of the contest, showing that they were intimately connected with the discipline and system of the American marine.

Captain Hull having performed the two handsome exploits recorded, now gave up the command of his frigate, with a feeling that was highly creditable to him, in order to allow others an equal chance to distinguish themselves, there being unfortunately many more captains than vessels in the navy, at that trying moment. Captain Bainbridge was named to be his successor, being transferred from the *Constellation* 38, then fitting for sea at Washington, to the *Constitution*.*

As Captain Bainbridge was one of the oldest officers of his rank in the service, he was given a command consisting of his own ship, the *Essex* 32, and the *Hornet* 18. He hoisted his broad pennant on board the *Constitution*, accordingly, on the 15th of September, at Boston. Captain Stewart, lately returned from a furlough, was appointed to the *Constellation* 38, and Mr. Charles Morris, the first lieutenant of the *Constitution* in the chase, and in the battle, was shortly after promoted to the rank of captain, passing the step of master-commandant, as had been the case with Commodore Decatur.† This was the second time this officer had been promoted for his conduct in battle, and he probably owed his present elevation over the heads of his seniors, to this circumstance, coupled with the fact that his wound in the late action had so nearly been fatal.

Whatever may have been the merits of the officer who was the subject of this exercise of executive power, and they are known to be of a very high order, there is little question that the precedent set, not only in his case, but in that of Captain Decatur, is of a very dangerous character. No general rule can be safer than to promote the first lieutenant of a victorious ship; for the efficiency of a man-of-war depends as much on this officer as on her commander, and while it may be no more than an act of justice, it is an incentive to constant preparation; but no policy can be weaker than that which deprives many of their self-respect and just professional pride, in order to reward the services and sustain the hopes of one. The policy of the navy has been characterised by acts of this vacillating and short-sighted nature; and thus it is that we have so long wit-

* Bainbridge had been ordered to the *Constitution* before she sailed on this cruise, but it is not to be supposed Hull would not have been permitted to retain his command, after his victory, had he pressed for it.

† There may have been a slight difference in the two cases, as the rank of masters and commanders did not legally exist in 1804, though the executive issued its commissions.

nessed the fact of veterans lingering in the stations that they have held for quite forty years, through the neglect of the proper authorities to create a new and superior rank, in contrast with occasional and indiscreet exercises of patronage. These irregularities, in which there is excess of favour on one side, with denials of justice on another, are the fruits of the influence of popular feeling over a corps, that, being necessarily subjected, in its ordinary duties, to the rigid exactions of martial law, is entitled at all times, to have its interests protected by a uniform, consistent, rigidly just, and high-toned code of civil regulations. It is not the least of the merits of the American marine, that it has earned its high reputation in despite of the various disadvantages of this nature, under which it has laboured.*

CHAPTER V.

Neglect of navy by congress---Com. Rodgers' second cruise---United States captures the Macedonian---Cruise of the *Argus*---Cruises of the *Wasp* and the combat with the *Frolic*.

IT is worthy of notice, that Congress did nothing of any moment towards increasing the navy, on the ocean, during the year 1812, although war was declared in June. This neglect of this important branch of the public service, under circumstances that would seem so imperiously to call for the fostering care and active exertions of the government, must be ascribed to the doubts that still existed as to the possibility of keeping ships at sea, in face of the British navy. It had so long been customary for the world to say, that France, whenever she put a ship into the water, was merely building for her great enemy, that an opinion was prevalent, America would be doing the same thing, if she wasted her resources in creating a marine; and it literally became necessary for the accomplished officers who composed the germ of the service, to demonstrate, from fact to fact, their ability to maintain the honour of the country, before that country would frankly confide to them the means. As we proceed in the narrative of events, this singular historical truth will become more apparent.

Commodore Rodgers, having refitted, sailed on a second cruise, leaving the *Hornet* in port; but Commodore Decatur, in the United States 44, and the *Argus* 16, Captain Sinclair, parted company with him, at sea, on the 12th of October, after cruising some time without falling in with any thing of importance. On the 17th, he captured the British packet *Swallow*, with a large amount of specie on board,

* In the end, the promotion of Captain Morris made but little difference in his position in the service, except as regards the lieutenants, an advantage very properly obtained, most of the masters and commanders regaining their relative rank on promotion. One, however, Captain Ludlow, a very respectable officer, was induced to resign.

and continued his cruise to the eastward. In the mean while, the United States and Argus having separated, the former stood more to the southward and eastward, with a view to get into the track of the enemy's Indiamen. Sunday, October 25th, the United States, then in lat. 29° N., long. $29^{\circ} 30'$ W., made a large sail to the southward and eastward. The stranger was running down a little free, while the American ship was on a wind, standing towards the chase, which was soon ascertained to be an enemy. The latter having come within a league, hauled up, and passed to windward, when each party was enabled to see that they had a frigate to oppose. The stranger now wore and came round on the same tack with the United States, keeping away sufficiently to get within reach of her long guns, when she hauled up on an easy bowline, with her mizen-top-sail aback. At this moment the distance between the two ships a little exceeded a mile when the Englishman opened his fire. Finding the enemy on his weather quarter, Commodore Decatur delivered his larboard broadside, wore round, and came up to the wind on the other tack, heading northerly. It was observed that all the carro-nade shot fell short, the enemy doing very little injury by his fire.

Having passed her antagonist, the United States delivered her starboard broadside, and wore again, bringing her head once more to the southward, or on the same tack as the enemy, both ships steering rap full, with their mizen-topsails aback, and keeping up a heavy cannonade. In this manner the action continued about an hour, the English vessel suffering heavily, while her own fire inflicted very little injury on her antagonist. At length the stranger's mizen-mast came down over his lee quarter, having been shot away about ten feet above the deck. He then fell off, and let his foresail drop, apparently with a wish to close. As the ships got near together, the shot of the American vessel did fearful execution, the forecourse being soon in ribands, the fore and main-topmasts over the side, the main-yard cut away in the slings, and the foremast tottering. The United States now filled her mizen-topsail, gathered fresh way, and tacked. As the stranger was drifting down, nearly before the wind, and was almost unmanageable, Commodore Decatur had no difficulty in heading up high enough to cross his wake, which he handsomely effected, with his people still manning the larboard guns. At the time the United States filled her mizen-topsail, in preparation for stays, it is said that the enemy, under the impression she was about to run away, gave three cheers, and set a union jack in his main rigging, all his other flags having come down with the several spars. When, however, the American ship was seen luffing up to close, the jack was lowered, and resistance ceased.

As the United States crossed the stern of the English ship, the firing having ceased on both sides, she hailed and demanded the name of her antagonist, and whether she had submitted. To the first interrogatory, Commodore Decatur was answered that the ship was the Macedonian 38, Captain Carden, and to the second, that the vessel had struck. On taking possession, the enemy was found fearfully cut to pieces, having received no less than a hundred round

shot in his hull alone. Of three hundred men on board him, thirty-six were killed, and sixty-eight wounded.

The Macedonian was a very fine ship of her class, mounting, as usual, 49 guns, eighteens on her gun-deck, and thirty-two-pound carronades above. She was smaller, of lighter armament, and had fewer men than her opponent, of course, but the disproportion between the force of the two vessels, was much less than that between the execution. In this action, the advantage of position was with the British ship until she was crippled, and the combat was little more than a plain cannonade, at a distance that rendered grape or musketry of little or no use, for the greater part of the time. The fire of the United States took effect so heavily in the waist of her antagonist, that it is said the marines of the latter were removed to the batteries, which circumstance increased the efficiency of the ship, by enabling new crews to be placed at guns that had been once cleared of their men. On the other hand, the marines of the United States remained drawn up in the waist of that ship, most of the time quite useless, though they are understood to have shown the utmost steadiness and good conduct under the example of their gallant commander, the weight of the enemy's fire passing a short distance above their heads.

The United States suffered surprisingly little, considering the length of the cannonade, and her equal exposure. She lost one of her top-gallant masts, received some wounds in the spars, had a good deal of rigging cut, and was otherwise injured aloft, but was bulled a very few times. Of her officers and people 5 were killed and 7 wounded. Of the latter, two died, one of whom was Mr. John Musser Funk, the junior lieutenant of the ship. No other officer was hurt.

On taking possession of his prize, Commodore Decatur found her in a state that admitted of her being taken into port. Her two principal masts were secured, and a jury mizen-mast was rigged by Mr. Allen, the first lieutenant of the United States, who was put in charge of her, with great ingenuity, so as to convert the vessel into a bark.

When the necessary repairs were completed, the two ships made the best of their way to America; Commodore Decatur discontinuing his cruise, in order to convoy his prize into port. The United States arrived off New London on the 4th of December, and about the same time the Macedonian got into Newport. Shortly after, both ships reached New York by the Hell Gate passage.

The order and style with which the Macedonian was taken, added materially to the high reputation that Commodore Decatur already enjoyed. His services were acknowledged in the usual manner, and he was soon after directed to cruise in the United States, with the Macedonian, Captain Jones, in company. Mr. Allen, the first lieutenant of the United States, was promoted to the rank of a master-commandant, and he received due credit for the steady discipline that the ship's company had displayed.

The Argus, under Captain Sinclair, after separating from the United States, cruised alone, making several captures of merchantmen, though she met no vessel of war, of a force proper for her to

engage. During this cruise, the brig was chased for three days and nights, the latter being moonlight, by a squadron of the enemy, two of which were ships of the line. On this occasion, the *Argus* proved her fine qualities, and the coolness of her officers and people did them infinite credit. All the guns were preserved, though the brig was so hard pressed as to be obliged to start her water, to cut away anchors, and to throw overboard some of her boats. Notwithstanding the perseverance of her pursuers, the *Argus* actually took and manned a prize during the chase, though two of the enemy got near enough to open their fire as the vessels separated. The brig escaped, having made five prizes before she got in.

While these events were in the course of accomplishment, among the other vessels, the *Wasp* 18, Captain Jones, left the *Delaware* on a cruise. She was one of the sloops built at the close of the Tripolitan war, and like her sister ship the *Hornet*, a beautiful and fast cruiser. The latter, however, which originally was a brig, had been rebuilt, or extensively repaired at Washington, on which occasion, she had been pierced for twenty guns, and rigged into a ship. The *Wasp* still retained her old armament and construction, having been a ship from the first, mounting 16 thirty-two pound carronades and 2 long twelves. Her complement of men varied from 130 to 160, according to circumstances. She had been to Europe with despatches before the declaration of war, and did not return home until some weeks after hostilities had commenced.

The *Wasp*, after refitting, sailed on a cruise to the northward. She ran off Boston, made one capture, and after an absence of three weeks, returned to the *Delaware*. On the 13th of October, she sailed a second time, and ran off east, southerly, to clear the coast, and to get into the track of vessels steering north. Three days out it came on to blow very heavily, when the ship lost her jib-boom, and two men that were on it at the moment. The next day the weather moderated, and about 11 o'clock in the night of the 17th, being then in latitude 37° N., and longitude 65° W., several sail were made. Two of these vessels appeared to be large, and Captain Jones did not deem it prudent to close, until he had a better opportunity of observing them, but hauling off to a convenient distance, he steered in the same direction with the unknown vessels, with the intention of ascertaining their characters in the morning. When the day dawned, the strangers were seen ahead, and to leeward. Making sail to close, they were soon ascertained to be a small convoy of six English ships, under the charge of a heavy brig of war. Four of the merchantmen were armed, apparently, mounting, as well as could be ascertained at that distance, from 12 to 18 guns. The commander of the brig, however, manifested no wish to avail himself of the assistance of any of his convoy, but shortening sail, the latter passed ahead, while he prepared to give battle.

The *Wasp* now sent down topgallant-yards, close reefed her topsails, and was otherwise brought under short fighting canvass, there being a good deal of sea on. The stranger was under little sail also, and his main yard was on deck, where it had been lowered to undergo

repairs. As it was the evident intention of the Englishman to cover his convoy, very little manœuvring was necessary to bring the vessels alongside of each other. At 32 minutes past 11 A. M., the *Wasp* ranged close up on the starboard side of the enemy, receiving her broadside, at the distance of about sixty yards, and delivering her own. The fire of the Englishman immediately became very rapid, it having been thought at the time, that he discharged three guns to the *Wasp's* two, and as the main-topmast of the latter ship was shot away within five minutes after the action commenced, appearances, at first, were greatly in the enemy's favour. In eight minutes, the gaff and mizen topgallant-mast also fell. But, if the fire of the *Wasp* was the most deliberate, it was much the most deadly.

In consequence of the fall of the main-topmast of the American ship, which, with the main-topsail-yard, lodged on the fore and fore-topsail braces, it became next to impossible to haul any of the yards, had circumstances required it, but the battle was continued with great spirit on both sides, until the ships had gradually closed so near, that the bends of the *Wasp* rubbed against her antagonist's bows. Here the vessels came foul, the bowsprit of the enemy passing in over the quarter-deck of the *Wasp*, forcing her bows up into the wind, and enabling the latter to throw in a close raking fire.

When Captain Jones perceived the effect of the enemy's fire on his spars and rigging, it was his intention to board, and he had closed with this view; but finding his ship in so favourable a position to rake the enemy, he countermanded an order to that effect, and directed a fresh broadside to be delivered. The vessels were now so near that in loading some of the *Wasp's* guns, the rammers hit against the bows of her antagonist, and the people of the English ship could no longer be kept at their quarters forward. The discharge of one or two of the carronades swept the enemy's decks, when the impetuosity of the *Wasp's* crew could no longer be restrained, and they began to leap into the rigging, and from thence on the bowsprit of the brig. As soon as Mr. Biddle, the first lieutenant of the *Wasp*, found that the people were not to be restrained, he sprang into the rigging, followed by Lieutenant G. Rodgers and a party of officers and men, and the attempt to board was seriously made. On the fore-castle of the brig, Mr. Biddle passed all his own people, but there was no enemy to oppose him. Two or three officers were standing aft, most of them bleeding. The decks were strewed with killed and wounded, but not a common hand was at his station, all of those that were able having gone below, with the exception of the man at the wheel. The latter had maintained his post, with the spirit of a true seaman, to the very last.

The English officers threw down their swords, in token of submission, as Mr. Biddle passed aft, and it ought to be added, to the credit of the conquerors, notwithstanding the excitement of such scenes are too apt to lead even the disciplined into excesses, not an enemy was injured by the boarders. Mr. Biddle sprang into the main rigging, and lowered the English flag with his own hands, when the combat ceased, after a duration of 43 minutes.

The prize turned out to be the British sloop of war *Frolic* 18, Captain Whinyates, homeward bound, with the vessels in the Honduras trade under convoy. The *Frolic*, with the exception of being a brig, was a vessel of the size and construction of the *Wasp*. She mounted on her main deck, 16 thirty-two pound carronades, four long guns, differently stated to have been sixes, nines, and twelves, and with two twelve-pound carronades on a topgallant forecastle. This armament would make a force greater than that of the *Wasp* by four guns, a disparity that is not immaterial in vessels so small. The two crews were pretty equal in numbers, though it is probable that the *Wasp* may have had a few men the most, a difference that was of little moment under the circumstances, more particularly as the *Frolic* was a brig, and the battle was fought, by both vessels, under very short sail.*

The *Wasp* was cut up aloft to an unusual degree, there having been no question that her antagonist's fire was heavy and spirited. The braces and standing rigging were nearly all shot away, and some of the spars that stood were injured. She had five men killed, and five wounded. The hull sustained no great damage.

The *Frolic* was also much injured in her spars and rigging, more particularly in the former; and the two vessels were hardly separated, before both her masts fell. She had been hulled at almost every discharge, and was virtually a wreck when taken possession of by the Americans. Her loss in men was never accurately known, but her captain, first lieutenant, and master, were wounded; the two latter, mortally. Mr. Biddle, who remained in charge of the prize, after so gallantly boarding her, stated, that as far as he could ascertain, she had from 70 to 80 killed and wounded. Subsequent information, however, has given reason to believe that the number was even greater. Captain Whinyates, in his official report, states that not 20 of his crew escaped unhurt, which would probably raise the casualties to a number between 90 and 100.

The *Frolic* had scarcely submitted, when a large sail was seen standing towards the two vessels, evidently a ship of force. Instructions were given to Mr. Biddle to make the best of his way to Charleston with the prize, and the *Wasp* began to make sail, with an intention to continue her cruise; but on opening her canvass, and turning the reefs out of her topsails, they were found to be nearly in ribands. The stranger, which turned out to be the enemy's ship *Poictiers* 74, hove a shot over the *Frolic*, in passing, and soon ranging up near the *Wasp*, both vessels were captured. The *Poictiers* proceeded with her two prizes to Bermuda, and the Americans being parolled, soon after returned home.

As this was the first combat of the war between vessels of a force so nearly equal as to render cavilling difficult, the result occasioned much exultation in America, and greatly increased the confidence of the public, in supposing an American ship had quite as many claims to conduct, courage, and skill, as her enemies. Persons of

*The *Wasp's* muster-roll, on the morning of the 18th October, contained the names of 138 persons all told.

reflection attached but little importance, it is true, to the mere fact that a few cruisers had been taken in single combat, but the idea of British invincibility was destroyed, and the vast moral results were distinctly foreseen. Men part with their prejudices slowly and with reluctance; and the warfare on the ocean produced one on the land, in which the contending parties, by pretending to analyse the three combats that had now occurred, displayed on both sides more ignorance than logic, and much intemperance of language and prevarication.

They who understood the power of ships, and examined details, with a real desire to learn the truth, discovered that a new era had occurred in naval warfare. While these critics perceived and admitted the superiority of the American frigates, in the two actions that had occurred, they could not but see that it was not in proportion to the execution they had done; and in the combat between the two little vessels that has just been recorded, the important fact was not overlooked, that the enemy's brig had suffered as severe a loss in men, as it was usual for the heaviest vessels to sustain in general actions. Hitherto English ships had been compelled to seek close contests with their foes, but now they had only to back their topsails to be certain of being engaged at the muzzles of their guns. There was no falling off in British spirit; no vessel was unworthily given up; for the case of the *Alert* may be taken as a surprise; and it was necessary to search for the cause of this sudden and great change in the character of the new adversary. The most cavilling detractors of the rising reputation of the American marine, were reluctantly obliged to admit that naval combats were no longer what they had been; and the discreet among the enemy, saw the necessity of greater caution, more laboured preparations, and of renewed efforts.

As respects the particular combat between the *Wasp* and *Frolic*, in the published account of the English captain, much stress was laid on the crippled condition of this ship, when she went into action. It is admitted that the *Frolic* had her main-yard on deck when she engaged, and, as little canvass was required, her after-sail was reduced to her fore-and-aft mainsail. There are circumstances in which the loss of a brig's main-topsail would be of the last importance; and there are circumstances, again in which it would be of but little moment. On this occasion it does not appear to have materially influenced the result; and the very fact that the yard was down, may have prevented the mast from falling during the engagement, instead of falling after it. On details of this nature, it is difficult to reason accurately, so much depending on minute circumstances, that must escape the general observer. In effect, the loss of the main-yard converted the *Frolic* into a half-rigged brig, a species of vessel that is in much request among seamen, and which would require fewer men to manage than a full-rigged brig.*

*The English commander in his account of the action however, states that he had suffered in a severe gale on the night preceding the engagement, losing his topsails, carrying away his main-yard, and springing his main-topmast. On the night preceding the action, the *Wasp* is known to have been watching the convoy, quite near by, and noth-

Captain Jones was promoted shortly after this success, and he was appointed to the command of the Macedonian 38, which ship had been purchased and taken into the service. The name of Mr. Bidle, who was an old lieutenant, and whose spirited conduct in the action was much appreciated, was also included in the list of masters and commanders that was sent into the senate about the same time.*

CHAPTER VI.

Squadron of Com. Bainbridge—He sails with only two of his ships—Challenge to the *Bonne Citoyenne*—Action between the *Constitution* and *Java*—Action between *Hornet* and *Peacock*—Congress determines to increase the navy—Bainbridge quits the *Constitution*—Lawrence promoted.

WHEN Commodore Bainbridge took command of the three vessels that have been already mentioned, the *Constitution* 44, his own ship, and *Hornet* 18, Captain Lawrence, were lying in the port of Boston; and the *Essex* 32, Captain Porter, had just gone into the Delaware. Orders were sent to the latter officer, to rendezvous first at Port Praya, in the island of St. Jago; and secondly, at Fernando Noronha. Other places of resort were pointed out; and he was also instructed to cruise in the track of the enemy's Indiamen, until a time mentioned, when, if he failed to fall in with his senior officer, he was at liberty to follow his own discretion. As the *Essex* never joined the other ships, we shall defer the mention of her active and highly interesting cruise, to another chapter.

The *Constitution* and *Hornet* sailed from Boston on the 26th of October. Touching at the different rendezvous, where they appeared in the character of British vessels of war, letters were left for Captain Porter, under the assumed name of Sir James Yeo, of the Southampton 32,† according to arrangement, and the ships proceeded.

Commodore Bainbridge arrived off St. Salvador on the 13th of December, and the *Hornet* was sent in to communicate with the

ing is said of any gale, though one had occurred the day previous. These are some of the discrepancies with which the historian has to contend, but it is not improbable that many of them ought to be ascribed to the public officers rather than to the mistakes of eye-witnesses.

* Captain Jones mentioned the names of all his officers with approbation. The other lieutenants were, Mr. George Rodgers, who died a few years since, in the command of the *Brazil* station; Booth, since dead, a commander; Claxton, died a commodore in the Pacific; and Rapp, acting, now dead.

† When the *Essex* arrived, Captain Porter obtained one of these letters which, in addition to some common-place matter, contained orders in sympathetic ink, for his future movements. Captain Porter relates the occurrence, and gives a copy of the letter, in his journal of the *Essex's* cruise, the nature of the whole transaction appearing on its face. The letter speaks for itself, yet Captain Porter, in a leading English publication, was charged with being guilty of an improper act, for opening a letter directed to another person! When national hostility blinds a writer to such a degree as this, he puts himself without the pale of common sense, if not without that of common honesty.

consul. Captain Lawrence found the British sloop of war *Bonne Citoyenne* 18, Captain Green, in port, but about to sail for England, with a very large amount of specie on board. The presence of this vessel, suggested a hope of being able to get her out. After conversing with the consul, that gentleman was empowered to inform the commander of the English ship, that Captain Lawrence was desirous of meeting him at sea, and to give the necessary pledges that the Constitution would be out of the way. A correspondence took place between the English and American consuls on the subject, and in the end, Captain Green declined acceding to the proposal.

There may be occasions in which an officer is justified in giving an invitation of this kind to an enemy's ship, since a challenge may have all the practical effects of a *ruse de guerre*, by getting a vessel under his guns in this manner, that he might not be able to get there in any other way. Had the *Hornet* taken the *Bonne Citoyenne*, by the aid of this provocation, she would have conferred a great benefit on her country, and inflicted a great injury on the enemy, both of which were the legitimate objects of her cruise; but challenges of this sort are generally to be avoided, since they may be the means of compelling an officer to engage at a moment when it would be his duty to avoid an action. The commander of a vessel of war is bound, at all times to retain as perfect a control of his movements as possible, that he may be in a situation to consult the public good, as events arise; and the officer who is pledged to meet his enemy under prescribed rules, is no longer the master of his own movements, should general duty suddenly interfere with his particular convention. There can be no question, that, under his peculiar circumstances, Captain Green decided properly, in refusing to meet the *Hornet*, though the reason that was given was objectionable, inasmuch as he appeared to distrust an interference on the part of the American frigate.

The Constitution left the *Hornet* to blockade the *Bonne Citoyenne* alone, on the 26th, and stood to the southward, keeping the land aboard. About 9 A. M. of the 29th, when in lat. $13^{\circ} 6'$ S., and long. 31° W., or at a distance of ten leagues from the coast, two strange sail were made, inshore and to windward. One of these vessels continued to stand in, while the other, which was much the largest, altered her course in the direction of the American frigate, which had tacked to close with her. The day was pleasant, there was but little sea, and the wind was light at E. N. E.

At 11 A. M., being satisfied that the strange sail was an enemy's frigate, the Constitution tacked again to the southward and eastward, to draw her off the land, which was plainly in sight. At the same time, she set her royals, and boarded main-tack, in order to effect this object.

At 12 M. the Constitution showed her colours, and shortly after the stranger set the English ensign. Signals were made by both ships, but proved to be mutually unintelligible. At 20 minutes past 1, P. M., believing himself far enough from the land, Commodore Bainbridge took in his main-sail and royals, and tacked towards the

enemy. Soon after, both ships had their heads to the southward and eastward, the Englishman being to windward more than a mile distant, and well on the Constitution's quarter.

The enemy had now hauled down his ensign, though he kept a jack flying, and Commodore Bainbridge ordered a shot fired ahead of him, to induce him to show his colours anew. This order brought on a general fire, and the battle commenced at 2, P. M., on both sides, with a furious cannonade. As in the light wind that prevailed, the enemy sailed the best, he soon forged ahead, and kept away with a view to cross the Constitution's bow, but was foiled by the latter ship's waring, which brought the heads of the two combatants once more to the westward. In performing these evolutions, as the enemy steered free, and the Constitution luffed, the vessels got within pistol-shot, when the former repeated the same attempt, the ships waring together, bringing their heads once more to the eastward. The English ship forereaching again, now endeavoured to tack to preserve the weather gage, but failing, she was obliged to ware, a manœuvre that the Constitution had executed before her, to avoid being raked, for the wheel of the latter ship had been shot away, and it was difficult to watch the vessel with the helm, as closely as was desirable. The Constitution, notwithstanding, was the first in coming to the wind on the other tack, and she got an efficient raking fire at her opponent.

Both vessels now ran off free, with the wind on the quarter, the English ship still to windward, when the latter being greatly injured, made an attempt to close, at 55 minutes past 2, by running down on the Constitution's quarter. Her jib-boom ran into the Constitution's mizen rigging, in which situation she suffered severely, without being able to effect her purpose. The head of her bowsprit was soon shot away, and in a few minutes after, her foremast came by the board. The Constitution shot ahead, keeping away to avoid being raked; and in separating, the stump of the enemy's bowsprit passed over the American frigate's taffrail.

The two ships now brought the wind abeam again, with their heads to the eastward, and the Constitution having forereached, in consequence of carrying the most sail, wore, passed her antagonist, luffed up under his quarter, wore again, and the Englishman having kept away, the vessels came alongside of each other, and engaged for a short time, yard-arm and yard-arm. In a few minutes the enemy lost his mizen-mast, leaving nothing standing but his main-mast, with the yard shot away near the slings. As his fire had ceased, the Constitution hauled aboard her tacks, and luffed athwart her antagonist's bow; passing out of the combat to windward, at five minutes past 4, with her topsails, courses, spanker, and jib set. In executing this manœuvre, Commodore Bainbridge was under the impression that the enemy had struck, the ensign which had been hoisted in his main-rigging being down, his ship a wreck, and his fire silenced.

The Constitution having got a favourable weatherly position, passed an hour in repairing damages, and in securing her masts; it being all-important to an American frigate so far from home, without

colonies or military stations to repair to, and an ocean to traverse that was covered with enemies, to look vigilantly to these great auxiliaries. In about an hour, observing an ensign still flying on board his enemy, Commodore Bainbridge wore round, and standing directly across his fore-foot, the English vessel anticipated his fire by striking.

The Constitution immediately wore, with her head on the same tack as the captured vessel, hoisted out a boat, and sent Mr. Parker, her first lieutenant, to take possession. The prize proved to be the British frigate Java 38, Captain Lambert, bound to the East Indies, having on board as passengers, Lieutenant General Hislop and staff, together with several supernumerary sea-officers, and a considerable number of men, intended for other ships.

This combat lasted near two hours, from the commencement to the end of the firing, and it had been warmly contested on both sides, but with very different results. Although there was more manœuvring than common, the Java had been literally picked to pieces by shot, spar following spar, until she had not one left. Her foremast was first cut away near the cat-harpings, and afterwards, by a double-headed shot, about five-and-twenty feet from the deck. The main-topmast went early, and the main-mast fell after the Constitution hauled off. The mizen-mast was shot out of the ship, a few feet from the deck, and the bowsprit near the cap. Her hull was also greatly injured; and her loss in men, according to the British published accounts, was 22 killed and 102 wounded; though there is good reason for supposing it was considerably greater. Commodore Bainbridge stated it at 60 killed and 101 wounded. There may have been some discrepancy in these statements, in consequence of the great number of supernumeraries on board the Java, which ship is said to have had more than 400 men in her when taken, or near 100 more than her regular complement.* Captain Lambert, of the Java, was mortally wounded; and one of her lieutenants, the master, and many of her inferior officers, were slain, or seriously hurt.

The Constitution did not lose a spar! She went into action with her royal yards across, and came out of it with all three of them in their places. An eighteen-pound shot passed through her mizen mast; the fore-mast was slightly wounded, and the main-mast was untouched. The main-topmast was also slightly wounded; a few other spars were hit, without being carried away; the running rigging was a good deal cut; several shrouds were parted, and the ship received a few round shot in her hull. Of her crew, 9 were killed, and 25 were wounded. Among the latter were Commodore Bainbridge, and the junior lieutenant, Mr. Aylwin. The last died of his injuries, some time after the action. Commodore Bainbridge was slightly hurt in the hip, early in the engagement, by a musket-ball; and the shot that carried away the wheel, drove a small copper

*The British accounts state the crew of the Java at 377 men including supernumeraries. Commodore Bainbridge reports that he furloughed 361 officers, seamen, marines, and boys, exclusively of 8 passengers and 9 Portuguese seamen, making 378 souls. If to these be added the 22 allowed to be killed by the enemy, a total of just 400 is obtained. But it is said that a muster-list, made five days after the Java sailed, contained just 446 names.

bolt into his thigh, inflicting a dangerous wound, though he kept the deck until midnight.*

Although the injuries to the hull of the *Java* were not of a nature to render her being carried into port difficult, the smoothness of the sea having prevented her from receiving many shot below the water-line, there existed many objections to attempting it. In the first place, it was known that the Brazilian government was favourable to that of Great Britain, and there had been strong proof of it during the recent visit of Commodore Bainbridge to St. Salvador. That officer, therefore felt a hesitation about trusting his prize in a Brazilian port. The difficulty of obtaining masts of the necessary size, the distance from home, and the risks of recapture, on nearing the coast, united to render it expedient to destroy her. After lying by her two or three days, therefore, with a view to remove the wounded with proper care, the *Java* was blown up, and the *Constitution* made the best of her way to St. Salvador, where she immediately landed her prisoners on parole.

Throughout the whole of the transactions connected with the interests and feelings of the officers and men he had captured, Commodore Bainbridge manifested a liberality and delicacy, that tended to relieve the miseries that war necessarily inflicts, and which appear to have left a deep impression on the enemy.

The same general peculiarities attended this combat, as had distinguished the two other cases of frigate actions. In all three, the American vessels were superior to their antagonists; but in all three, had the difference in execution been greatly out of proportion to the disparity in force. The *Java*, like the *Guerriere*, had been well handled, but her fire had been badly aimed; and it began to be no longer believed that the broadside of an English ship was as formidable as it had been represented. It would seem that the *Constitution* actually wore six times, after the action had fairly commenced; and allowing for the positions of the ships, the lightness of the wind, and the space that it was necessary to run, in order to avoid being raked while executing these evolutions, it is probable that the cannonade did not actually occupy an hour. The action must have terminated some miles to leeward of the spot where it commenced.†

*Some touching anecdotes are related of the incidents of this combat. Two Marblehead seamen, brothers, of the name of Cheever, were on board the *Constitution*, one was killed, and the other mortally wounded. It is said that there were twins, midshipmen, in the *Java*, and that both were killed.

†The discussion in the public prints, which naturally followed the different combats, in nations speaking the same language, brought forth some minute statements at the time, that seem to have been better founded than common. By one of these statements, which was evidently made by an officer of the *Constitution*, that ship mounted, in the action with the *Java*, 54 guns, and threw 677 lbs. 5oz. of metal at a broadside; the apparent deficiency between the metal and the known caliber of the guns, arising from short weight in the shot. On the other hand the *Java* is said to have mounted 49 guns, and to have thrown 605 lbs. of metal at a broadside. It is affirmed in this account, that the *Java*'s eighteens threw a shot that weighed 19 lbs. If French eighteens, the shot ought to have weighed near 19½ lbs., and the *Java* had certainly been a French ship. Whether she retained her old armament or not, is not known. That the American shot, during all this war, were generally light, would seem to be certain. There may not have been perfect accuracy in the statement alluded to, but it is probable that the actual difference between the broadsides of the two ships, was much less than the apparent.

On reaching St. Salvador, Commodore Bainbridge found the *Hornet* off the port, and it was understood that the *Bonne Citoyenne* had hove-short, with an intention of going to sea that night. The arrival of the *Constitution* appears to have produced a change in this plan, if it ever existed. Remaining a few days in port to land his prisoners, and to complete his arrangements, Commodore Bainbridge sailed for America, January 6, 1813, and arrived at Boston on the 27th of February, after an absence of four months.

The *Hornet* was left with orders that were substantially discretionary. She remained off St. Salvador, blockading the *Bonne Citoyenne*, alone, for eighteen days, when she was chased into the harbour by the *Montagu* 74, which vessel had come to relieve the enemy's sloop of war from the awkward necessity of fighting with so much treasure on board, or of the still more unpleasant dilemma of appearing indisposed to meet a ship of equal force.* It was late in the evening when the *Montagu* approached, and the *Hornet* availed herself of the darkness to ware and stand out again, passing into the offing without further molestation.

Captain Lawrence now hauled by the wind, to the northward and eastward, with the intention of going off Pernambuco. He made a few prizes, and continued cruising down the coast, until the 24th of February, when the ship was near the mouth of Demarara river. Here he gave chase to a brig, which drew him into quarter less five, when, having no pilot, he deemed it prudent to haul off shore. At this moment he supposed himself to be about two and a half leagues from the fort at the entrance of the river. As she had an English ensign set, and bore every appearance of being a man-of-war, it was determined to attack her. While the *Hornet* was beating round the Carobana bank, which lay between her and the enemy, with a view to get at the latter, another sail was made on her weather quarter, edging down towards her. It was now half past 3 P. M., and the *Hornet* continuing to turn to windward, with her original intention, by twenty minutes past 4 the second stranger was made out to be a large man-of-war brig, and soon after he showed English colours.

As soon as her captain was satisfied that the vessel approaching was an enemy, the *Hornet* was cleared for action, and her people went to quarters. The ship was kept close by the wind, in order to gain the weather gage, the enemy still running free. At 5 10, feeling certain that he could weather the Englishman, Captain Lawrence showed his colours and tacked. The two vessels were now standing towards each other, with their heads different ways, both close by the wind. They passed within half pistol-shot at 5 25, delivering

*The commander of the *Bonne Citoyenne* was much sneered at, in the publications of the day, for not going out to meet the *Hornet*. The censures, like the commendation, of ignorance and passion, are of no great importance, and he is entitled to the highest praise who can perform his duty without regarding either. It would be very difficult to show that a ship sent to convey treasure, ought to seek a conflict with a vessel of even inferior force; and there may be many reasons that, if known, might reflect credit on a commander for refusing a challenge, which could have no connexion with even this particular fact. Opinions on such subjects ought always to be expressed with caution; and there can be no stronger evidence of the high level of the public mind, than is shown in an indisposition to listen to detraction of this character.

their broadsides as the guns bore; each vessel using the larboard battery. As soon as they were clear, the Englishman put his helm hard up, with the intention to wear short round, and get a raking fire at the *Hornet*, but the manœuvre was closely watched and promptly imitated, and, firing his starboard guns, he was obliged to right his helm, as the *Hornet* was coming down on his quarter, in a perfect blaze of fire. The latter closed, and maintaining the admirable position she had got, poured in her shot with such vigour, that a little before 5 40, the enemy not only lowered his ensign, but he hoisted it union down, in the fore-rigging, as a signal of distress. His main-mast soon after fell.

Mr. J. T. Shubrick was sent on board to take possession. This officer soon returned with the information that the prize was the enemy's sloop of war *Peacock* 18, Captain Peake, and that she was fast sinking, having already six feet of water in her hold. Mr. Conner, the third lieutenant of the *Hornet*, and Mr. B. Cooper, one of her midshipmen, were immediately despatched with boats, to get out the wounded, and to endeavour to save the vessel. It was too late for the latter, though every exertion was made. Both vessels were immediately anchored, guns were thrown overboard, shot-holes plugged, and recourse was had to the pumps, and even to bailing, but the short twilight of that low latitude soon left the prize-crew, before the prisoners could be removed. In the hurry and confusion of such a scene, and while the boats of the *Hornet* were absent, four of the Englishmen lowered the stern boat of the *Peacock*, which had been thought too much injured to be used, jumped into it, and pulled for land, at the imminent risk of their lives.*

Mr. Conner became sensible that the brig was in momentary danger of sinking, and he endeavoured to muster the people remaining on board, in the *Peacock's* launch, which still stood on deck, the fall of the main-mast, and the want of time, having prevented an attempt to get it into the water. Unfortunately, a good many of the *Peacock's* people were below, rummaging the vessel, and when the brig gave her last wallow it was too late to save them.

The *Peacock* settled very easily but suddenly, in five and a half fathoms water, and the two American officers, with most of the men and several prisoners saved themselves in the launch, though not without great exertions. Three of the *Hornet's* people went down in the brig, and nine of the *Peacock's* were also drowned. Four more of the latter saved themselves by running up the rigging into the foretop, which remained out of the water, after the hull had got to the bottom. The launch had no oars, and it was paddled by pieces of boards towards the *Hornet*, when it was met by one of the cutters of that ship, which was returning to the brig. The cutter immediately pulled towards the *Peacock's* fore-mast, in the hope of finding some one swimming, but, with the exception of those in the top, no person was saved.

In this short encounter, the *Peacock* had her captain and four men

*These adventurers got ashore safely.

killed, and thirty-three wounded. The *Hornet* had one man killed, and two wounded, in addition to two men badly burned by the explosion of a cartridge. She suffered a good deal aloft, had one shot through the fore-mast, and the bowsprit was hit.

The *Peacock* was a vessel of the *Hornet*'s size, being a little shorter but having more beam. Her proper armament was thirty-twos, but, for some reason that is not known, they had been changed for lighter guns, and in the action she mounted 16 twenty-four pound carronades, 2 light long guns, a twelve pound carronade on her topgallant forecastle, and another light long gun aft. By her quarter bill she had 130 men on board, at the time she was taken. This force rendered her inferior to the *Hornet*, which ship mounted 18 thirty-two pound carronades and two long twelves. The *Hornet* in the action mustered 135 men fit for duty.

Notwithstanding the superiority of the *Hornet*, the same disparity between the execution and the difference in force, is to be seen in this action, as in those already mentioned. In allowing the *Hornet* to get the weather gage, the *Peacock* was outmanœuvred, but, with this exception, she is understood to have been well managed, though her gunnery was so defective. The only shot that touched the hull of the *Hornet*, was one fired as the latter ship was falling off, in waring, and it merely glanced athwart her bows, indenting a plank beneath the cat-head. As this must have been fired from the star-board guns of the *Peacock*, the fact demonstrates how well she was handled, and that, in waring, her commander had rightly estimated and judiciously used the peculiar powers of a brig, though the quick movements of his antagonist deprived him of the results he had expected, and immediately gave the *Hornet* a decided advantage in position. It would be cavilling to deny that this short combat was decided by the superior gunnery and rapid handling of the *Hornet*.*

As the brig at anchor might come out and attack her, the greatest exertions were made on board the *Hornet* to be in readiness to receive the enemy, and by 9 o'clock at night, new sails had been bent, her boats were stowed, the ship was cleared, and every thing was ready for another action. At 2 A. M., she got under way, and stood to the northward and westward, under easy sail. Captain Lawrence finding that he had now 277 souls on board, including the people of another prize, and that he was short of water, determined to return home. The allowance of water was reduced to three pints a man, and the ship ran through the West Indies, anchoring at Holmes's Hole, in Martha's Vineyard, on the 19th of March; whence she came through the Vineyard and Long Island Sounds to New York, without meeting an enemy.

*It is said that the first shot fired by the *Peacock* cut away the *Hornet*'s pennant. This could only happen, from having struck the water at a most unfortunate angle. The man killed in the American ship, was in the mizen-top. Indeed, in most of the combats of this war, much seamanship and great gallantry were discovered by the enemy, but he appeared singularly deficient in the knowledge of the means of turning these advantages to account. A great proportion of the men killed and wounded were aloft when they were hit. Had the guns of the *Peacock* been of the largest size, they could not have materially changed the result of this conflict, as the weight of shot that do not hit, can be of no great moment.

The successes of the *Constitution* and *Hornet*, two of the vessels of Commodore Bainbridge's squadron, served greatly to increase the popularity of the navy. Their commanders were rewarded with medals, swords, and votes of thanks, by different legislatures, and Captain Lawrence was promoted, and transferred to the command of the *Chesapeake*.

Congress, by this time, began to feel more confidence in the ability to withstand British prowess, and a law had been passed on the 2d of January, to increase the naval force of the country. By the provisions of this act, the President was empowered to build four ships to rate not less than seventy-four guns, and six ships to rate at forty-four guns each. This was at once multiplying the force of the navy ten-fold, and it may be esteemed the first step that was ever actually put in execution, towards establishing a marine that might prove of moment, in influencing the material results of a war. Measures were taken immediately to lay the keels of some of the ships of the line, and Commodore Bainbridge, being appointed to superintend the construction of one of them, relinquished the command of the *Constitution*.

Another law passed, on the 3d of March, directing six sloops of war to be built on the ocean, and authorising the construction of as many vessels on the lakes as the public service required. Congress also voted handsome sums to the officers and crews of the ships that had destroyed captured vessels of war, in the way of prize-money.

The history of the remaining ship of Commodore Bainbridge's squadron, shall be next given, with a view not to interrupt the connexion of this branch of the subject.

CHAPTER VII.

Essex sails to join Com. Bainbridge—Captures the *Nocton*—*Nocton* recaptured—Touches at different places without meeting the Commodore—Capt. Porter determines to go round the Horn—reaches Valparaiso—Captures a Peruvian corsair—makes several prizes of enemy's whalers—equips a cruiser, called the *Georgiana* 16, Lieut. Com. Downes—Paints and refits his own ship, at sea, living on the enemy.

THE *Essex* 32, has frequently been mentioned in the course of this history. This ship was properly rated, her gun-deck armament having originally consisted of 26 long twelves; but it had been changed previously to the war, and with the exception of a few chase guns of this caliber, she mounted thirty-two-pound carronades in their places. Her first cruise was under Preble, when she carried the pennant of an American man-of-war, for the first time, to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, and she was now destined again to open the way for the navy into a new sea.

When Commodore Bainbridge sailed from Boston, the *Essex*, still under the command of Captain Porter, was lying in the *Dela-*

ware, and she quitted that river the 28th of October, or two days after the other ships of the squadron had got to sea. In anticipation of a long cruise, Captain Porter carried out with him a crew larger than common, and a greater number of officers than properly belonged to a vessel of that class; the entire muster-roll containing three hundred and nineteen names, among which were three commissioned and two acting lieutenants, and twelve midshipmen. In consequence of the unusual amount of supplies that was taken in, the ship was too deep, and she did not reach the first rendezvous named in the orders of Commodore Bainbridge, until some time after the *Constitution* and *Hornet* had left it.

The *Essex* was singularly unfortunate in not falling in with an enemy of any sort in making this long run, and on the 11th of December she crossed the equator in longitude 30° W., the same bad luck attending her. On the 12th, however, about 2 P. M., a vessel was seen to windward, which had every appearance of an enemy's man-of-war brig, when sail was made in chase. At six, the stranger began to show signals, which went to confirm the idea of his character. As the chase was still to windward, and night was coming on fast, an unsuccessful effort was made to decoy her down, by showing signals in return. At sunset the brig showed English colours, and, when it was sufficiently dark, she made some night-signals. By 9 P. M. the *Essex* succeeded in getting within musket-shot. Captain Porter soon after hailed, and ordered the brig to settle her topsails, haul up her courses, and to heave-to to windward. At the same time, orders were given to the different divisions not to fire into the stranger, as it was very desirable to get possession without doing him any injury. Instead of complying with the directions of Captain Porter, however, the brig endeavoured to cross the stern of the *Essex*, by keeping away, probably with an intention to rake her, and to escape to leeward. This drew a volley of musketry from the frigate, which killed one man, when the brig struck.

The prize was the British government packet *Nocton* 10, with a crew of 31 men. On board of her were found \$55,000 in specie. The next day a crew of 17 men was put into the *Nocton*, under the orders of Acting Lieutenant Finch,* who was instructed to make the best of his way to America. This officer had got between Bermuda and the Capes of Virginia, in the execution of his duty, when he was compelled to heave to in a gale. Just as the weather moderated, a British frigate was made to windward. Mr. Finch tried the sailing of the brig with the enemy, on different tacks, but finally put away dead before the wind, as the only means of escape. As it was not in the power of the prize crew to make sail with sufficient rapidity to compete with a frigate's complement of men, the *Nocton* was soon within reach of the enemy's guns, and a few shot were fired, which did some injury to her rigging. Mr. Finch, however, held on, until the enemy had got close upon his quarter, and was about to fire a volley of musketry, when, escape being hopeless, he struck. Thus did the

*Since Captain William Compton Bolton

Essex lose her first prize, though the specie had been taken out of her, and was rendered secure by being subsequently used on account of the government.

On the 14th, the Essex made the island of Fernando de Noronha, and communicated with the land, without going in. Here Captain Porter obtained the letter mentioned from Commodore Bainbridge, informing him that he would find the other vessels off Cape Frio. From this time, until the 25th, the ship was making her passage towards the coast, and on the afternoon of that day, she hove to off the pitch of the Cape, where no signs were to be seen of the Constitution or Hornet. Three days afterwards, in fact, the first of these vessels captured the Java off St. Salvador. After cruising a short time, at this rendezvous, the Essex was drawn a long distance to leeward in chase; and in attempting to beat up again to her station, she was met by heavy weather, which induced Captain Porter to change his cruising ground. On the morning of the 29th, the frigate captured an English merchant vessel, which proved to be one of a convoy of six sail, in charge of a man-of-war schooner, that had left Rio only the night previously, this vessel having put back in consequence of discovering a leak. On obtaining this intelligence, Captain Porter followed the track of the convoy, and after a long and fruitless chase, he determined to go off St. Salvador, in order to intercept it. While beating up with this intention, information was received from different Portuguese vessels, of the presence of the other ships of the squadron off the port, and renewed efforts were made to join. But strong northerly winds prevailed, and Captain Porter, after struggling with them a week, decided to run into St. Catherine's to water.

Having been disappointed in his attempts to fall in with the commodore, at three rendezvous, and ascertaining that the Montagu 74, had sailed from Rio to raise the blockade of the vessels at St. Salvador, Captain Porter was now greatly at a loss which way to steer, in order to join the other ships. It was near the end of January, 1813, and, in point of fact, the Constitution had left the coast on the 6th of that month, on her way home. As the Hornet followed her on the 24th, in determining to act for himself, during the remainder of the cruise, Captain Porter came to a happy decision.

An American frigate, at that day cruising under the circumstances of the Essex, was in a very peculiar and difficult position. The influence of Great Britain extended over the whole of the South American continent, and nothing had been done by the American government to counteract it. In all the ports, on the east side of the continent in particular, little was to be expected from any of the local authorities; and the nation was totally without dépôts, or any provisions whatever, for the equipment of a man-of-war, out of its own ports. Even those that existed at home, were imperfect, on a small scale, and very insufficient. It cannot be too often repeated, that in connexion with this important branch of the public service, as in most others, the facts of the country had been permitted to precede its opinion, and its necessities to press upon its meagre and incomplete preparations. Captain Porter now found himself far from

home, in what might almost be termed an enemy's sea, and without any of those provisions for re-victualling, repairing, and obtaining military supplies, that are as indispensable in a naval as in a military campaign. In other words, he was thrown upon his own resources. In this novel situation, he determined to go still farther from home, to double Cape Horn, and, by making a dash at the English whalers in the Pacific, to live upon the enemy. The possession of the specie taken in the Nocton, and the knowledge that every whaler was well found in naval stores and provisions, their voyages commonly extending to more than three years, rendered this project not only practicable but expedient. It was thought that England had no force in that sea to protect her commerce, with the exception of a single ship of the line, which it was understood was about to quit it; and this bold scheme was, in truth, as much characterised by wisdom and prudence, as it was by enterprise and spirit, qualities that equally indicate the accomplished officer. The season was late for doubling the Horn, it is true; the ship was even then deficient in provisions and naval stores, but as Captain Porter has since explained his situation, in his own journal, his course lay between the attempt, "capture, a blockade, and starvation."

The *Essex* left St. Catherine's on the 26th of January, 1813, and after a most tempestuous passage round the Horn, she fell in with the pleasant southwest breeze of the Pacific Ocean on the 5th of March, and at meridian of that day her people got a distant view of the Andes. On the 5th, she anchored at the island of Mocha. Here some hogs and horses were procured for the crew, and it is worthy of remark, that the flesh of the latter was generally preferred to that of the former.

The *Essex* was now fairly in the Pacific, though she had not fallen in with an enemy for two months. There was but one chart of the ocean in the ship, and that was very small and imperfect; the provisions were getting short, and the vessel was much in want of cordage. Notwithstanding these necessities, Captain Porter felt reluctant to let his arrival be known until he had made a few captures, hoping to supply his ship from his prizes. Anxious to obtain information of the British force, by the same means, he determined to cruise a short time before he proceeded to Valparaiso. An ill fortune, however, continued to prevail, and for many days the ship was enveloped in fogs. She continued standing along shore, to the northward; and on the 13th, while running before a stiff southerly breeze, she rounded the Point of Angels, shot into full view of the port and town of Valparaiso, and was becalmed under the guns of a battery.

As he had English colours flying, Captain Porter came to a conclusion not to go in, for, taking a survey of the shipping in port, and perceiving several Spaniards ready to sail, he thought it prudent to let them get to sea before the arrival of an American cruiser became known in the place. One American was seen lying at anchor; a deeply laden brig, pierced for 18 guns. This vessel had her yards and topmasts struck, and boarding nettings triced up, as if she dis-

trusted her security, even in port. The ship's head was consequently kept to the northward, and the breeze striking her again, she ran the town out of sight in an hour or two. On the 15th, however, the ship returned, made the Point of Angels once more, went in, and anchored.

To the astonishment of Captain Porter, he now ascertained that Chili had declared itself independent of Spain, and his reception was as favourable as he could have desired. He also learned that the Viceroy of Peru had sent out cruisers against American shipping, and that his appearance in the Pacific was of the greatest importance to the American trade, which lay at the mercy of the English letters of marque, and of these Peruvian corsairs. This was cheering intelligence, after the fatigues and disappointments of a cruise of so many months.

For more than a week the Essex was employed in victualling, and during this time an American whaler came in from the islands. According to the accounts of the master of this vessel, the American whalers, which had left home during a time of peace, lay entirely at the mercy of those of the enemy, several of which had sailed as regular letters of marque, and all of which were more or less armed. Many of the American vessels, as they often kept the sea six months at a time, were probably still ignorant of the war; and it was known that one of them, at least, had already fallen into the hands of the English. As soon as imperfectly victualled, the ship went to sea, to profit by this intelligence.

On the 25th, the Essex fell in with the American whale ship Charles, and learned that two other vessels, the Walker and Barclay, had been captured, a few days previously, off Coquimbo, by a Peruvian, with an English ship in company. Sail was made, in consequence, in the direction of Coquimbo, and, a few hours later, a stranger was seen to the northward. This vessel was soon ascertained to be a cruising ship, disguised as a whaler. She showed Spanish colours, when the Essex set an English ensign, fired a gun to leeward, and the Charles which remained in company, hoisted the American flag, beneath an English jack. The Spaniard now ran down, and, when about a mile distant, he fired a shot ahead of the Essex, which that ship answered by throwing a few shot over him, to bring him nearer. When close enough, the Spanish ship sent an armed boat to board the Essex, and it was directed to go back with an order for the cruiser to run under the frigate's lee, and to send an officer to apologise for the shots he had fired at an English man-of-war. This command was complied with, and the ship was ascertained to be the Peruvian privateer Nereyda, armed with 15 guns, and with a full crew. The lieutenant, who now came on board, informed Captain Porter that they were cruising for Americans; that they had already taken the Walker and Barclay; that the English letter of marque Nimrod had driven their prize-crew from on board the Walker; that they were then cruising expressly to look for the Nimrod, with the intention of obtaining redress; and that they had mistaken the Essex for the latter ship. It would seem that the

Peruvians cruised against the Americans, under the impression that Spain, then so dependent on England for her existence, would declare war speedily against the United States, in consequence of the war declared by the latter against the King of Great Britain, which might legalise their captures.

An interview with the master of the Walker satisfied Captain Porter that the captured ships had been illegally seized; and hoisting American colours, he fired two shots over the *Nereyda*, when that vessel struck. Her crew were all sent on board the *Essex*, and the three ships stood in-shore to look into Coquimbo, in the hope of finding the *Nimrod* and the prizes, but without success. The next morning, the entire armament of the *Nereyda*, with all her ammunition, shot, small arms, and light sails, were thrown overboard, and she was otherwise put in a condition to do no harm, when she was released. It is worthy of remark, that the guns of this vessel were of iron, while her shot of all descriptions were of copper; the abundance of the latter in that part of the world, rendering it cheaper than the metal usually employed for such purposes.

From the master and crew of the *Barclay*, Captain Porter obtained a list of such of the whaling vessels as they knew to be in the Pacific. It contained the names of twenty-three Americans, and of ten English ships. The former was probably the most correct, as his informants added that quite twenty Englishmen were thought to be in that sea. The latter were, in general, fine vessels of near 400 tons burthen, and, as has been said already, they were all more or less armed.

Captain Porter had now a double object; to protect his country men and to capture the enemy. The latter were known to resort to the Gallipagos, but he hesitated about striking a blow in that quarter, until he could be assured that the *Standard 64*, had left Lima for England; and, as he thought the prizes of the *Nimrod* and *Nereyda* would endeavour to go into that port, he determined to make the best of his way thither, in order to cut them off, as well as to reconnoitre.

On the 28th of April, the ship was up with the island of San Gallan, when she hauled off to the northward and westward, with a view to cross the track of inward-bound vessels. The next day, three sails were made, standing for Callao. Every thing was set to cut the strangers off, particularly the one nearest in, who had the appearance of the *Barclay*. The chase, however, would have escaped, had she not been becalmed when she doubled the point of San Lorenzo. At this moment the frigate was near a league distant, but, fortunately, she kept the breeze until she had got within a hundred yards of the enemy, when she lowered her boats, and took possession. The prize proved to be the *Barclay*, as had been expected. There was now a good opportunity of looking into the harbour, and finding that nothing had arrived from Valparaiso to disclose his presence in the Pacific, Captain Porter showed English colours, while the *Barclay* hoisted the American under the enemy's ensign. In this manner both vessels went into the offing, where the *Barclay* was given up to

her proper officers, though most of her crew having entered in the Essex, and declining to rejoin the ship, her master preferred keeping in company with the frigate, offering to act as a pilot in searching for the enemy. With this understanding, the two vessels stretched off the coast, to the northward and westward.

From the end of March until the middle of April, the Essex, with the Barclay in company, was standing across from the main towards the islands, and on the 17th, she made Chatham Island; but no ship was found there. From this place the frigate went to Charles's Island, where she had the same want of success. At the latter island, however, was a box called "the post-office," in which the masters of the whalers were accustomed to leave written accounts of their luck and movements, and much information was obtained from them, concerning the different ships in the Pacific.

The Essex continued passing from island to island, without meeting with any thing, until her crew was aroused by the cheering cry of "sail ho!" on the morning of the 29th. A ship was made to the westward, and, soon after, two more a little further south. Chase was given to the first vessel, which was spoke under English colours, about 9 A. M. She proved to be the British whale-ship *Montezuma*, with 1400 barrels of oil on board. Throwing a crew into the prize, the Essex next made sail after the two other ships, which had taken the alarm, and endeavoured to escape. At 11 A. M., when the frigate was about eight miles from the two strangers, it fell calm, and the boats were hoisted out and sent against the enemy, under Mr. Downes, the first lieutenant. About 2 P. M. the party got within a mile of the nearest ship, when the two strangers, who were a quarter of a mile apart, hoisted English colours, and fired several guns. The boats now formed, and pulled for the largest ship, which kept training her guns on them as they approached, but struck without firing a shot, just as the boarders were closing. The second vessel imitated her example, when attacked in the same manner.*

The prizes were the *Georgiana* and the *Policy*, both whalers; and the three ships, together, furnished the Essex with many important supplies. They had bread, beef, pork, cordage, water, and among other useful things, a great number of Gallipagos tortoises.

The *Georgiana* had been built for the service of the English East India Company, and having the reputation of being a fast vessel, Captain Porter determined to equip her as a cruiser, with the double purpose of having an assistant in looking for the enemy, and of possessing a consort to receive his own crew in the event of any accident's occurring to the Essex. This ship was pierced for 18 guns, and had 6 mounted when taken. The *Policy* was also pierced for the same number, and had 10 guns mounted. The latter were now added to the armament of the *Georgiana*, which gave her 16 light guns. All the small arms were collected from the prizes and put in

*The reader may get an idea of a seaman's life, in these little incidents. In 1802, we have seen Captain Porter, as a lieutenant, going in boats, with Mr. Downes, then a midshipman, as an assistant, against Turks in the Mediterranean; and here we find the first, as a captain, directing the movements of the second, his first lieutenant, ten years later, in the Pacific, against Englishmen.

her, her try-works were taken down, and other alterations made, when Mr. Downes was placed in command, with a crew of 41 men. By this arrangement, it was believed that the *Georgiana* would be fully able to capture any of the English letters of marque, known to be cruising among the islands. In consequence of these changes, and the manning the two other prizes, notwithstanding several enlistments, the crew of the *Essex* was reduced to 264 souls, officers included. On the 8th of May, the *Georgiana* 16, Lieutenant Commandant Downes, hoisted the American pennant, and fired a salute of 17 guns.

It being uncommonly fine weather, Captain Porter seized the opportunity of repairing his own ship, by means of the stores obtained from the enemy. The rigging was overhauled and tarred down, many new spars were fitted, and the ship was painted in the middle of the Pacific, the enemy furnishing the means.

CHAPTER VIII.

Cruise of the *Essex* and *Georgiana*.—Captures of the British whalers *Atlantic* and *Greenwich* by the *Essex*.—Capture of the British whale ships *Catherine* and *Rose* by the *Georgiana*.—Sharp combat with and capture of the *Hector* by the same.—The *Georgiana* is despatched for America, with oil.—Lieut. Downes and crew transferred to the prize ship *Atlantic*, (*Essex Junior*).—The *Essex* captures the English whalers *Charlton*, *Seringapalam* and *New Zealander*.—The prisoners of the *Essex* are sent in the *Charlton* to Rio Janeiro, on parole.—The *Rose* is given up to the prisoners of the *Georgiana*, and sent to St. Helena.—The ship *Sir Andrew Hammond* taken by the *Essex*.—Capt. Porter proceeds to the *Marquesas* to refit.

A FEW trials, as soon as the ships made sail, proved that the *Georgiana* could not hold way with the *Essex*, and that her reputation, as a fast vessel, was unmerited. Still, as she had been relieved from much of her lumber, she outsailed the other ships, and hopes were entertained of her being made useful. Accordingly, on the 12th, she parted company, with orders to cruise against the enemy, and to rendezvous at different places on the coast, as well as at various islands, in a regular succession as to time. The separation was not long, however, the *Georgiana* looking into Charles's Island, in quest of English vessels, at a moment when the *Essex* happened to be there on the same errand.

The *Georgiana* was now sent to Albemarle Island, Captain Porter having reason to suppose that a particular ship of the enemy was in that quarter. The chaplain, having been allowed to make a short scientific excursion in boats, fell in with a strange sail on returning, and the *Essex* immediately went to sea in quest of her. But a cruise of several days was fruitless; and the ship continued passing among the islands, in the hope of falling in with something. An attempt to get across to the continent was defeated by the lightness of the winds

and the strength of the westerly currents ; and on the 25th of May, the Essex was still in the neighbourhood of Charles's Island.

On the afternoon of the 28th, however, a sail was made ahead, and a general chase was given, the Policy, Montezuma, and Barclay being all in company. At sunset, the stranger was visible from the frigate's deck. By distributing the vessels in a proper manner, the chase was in sight next morning ; and after a good deal of manœuvring, the Essex got alongside of her, and captured the British whaler Atlantic, of 355 tons, 24 men, and 8 eighteen-pound carronades. This ship, however, was pierced for 20 guns.

Another strange sail had been made while in chase of the Atlantic, and she was pursued and overtaken in the course of the night. This ship was the Greenwich, of 338 tons, 10 guns, and 25 men. Both the Atlantic and Greenwich had letters of marque, and being fast ships, were extremely dangerous to the American trade in the Pacific. When the Essex took these vessels, every officer but the captain, the chaplain, captain's clerk, and boat-swain, were out of her, either in boats, or in prizes ; the first having been lowered in a calm to chase, and left to be picked up by the Montezuma, when a breeze struck the frigate.

As Captain Porter had now four large prizes in company, besides the Georgiana and the Barclay, it became necessary to put even the marine officer, Lieutenant Gamble, in charge of one of them, when he shaped his course for Tumbez, on the continent, where he anchored on the 19th of June. Here the ships remained until the morning of the 24th, when three sail were discovered standing into the bay. As soon as they had got within two leagues, the leading vessel hove to and sent in a boat, on board of which was Mr. Downes. By this arrival an account of the movements of the Georgiana was obtained.

While cruising near James's Island, Mr. Downes had captured the British whale ships the Catherine, of 270 tons, 8 guns, and 29 men, and the Rose, of 220 tons, 8 guns, and 21 men. These two vessels were taken with no resistance, their masters having come on board the Georgiana, without suspecting her character. After manning his prizes, Mr. Downes had but 20 men and boys left in the Georgiana, when he chased and closed with a third whaler, called the Hector, a ship of 270 tons, 25 men, and 11 guns, though pierced for 20. At this time, Mr. Downes had also 50 prisoners, most of whom he was compelled to put in irons, before he brought the Hector to action.* When within hail, the latter ship was ordered to haul down her colours, but refused, and the Georgiana opened a fire upon her. A sharp combat followed, when the Hector struck, with the loss of her main-topmast, having had most of her standing and

*It is a curious fact, illustrative of the strong identity which exists on certain points, between the feelings of English and American seamen, that when the Georgiana went alongside of the Hector, in the night, it was under the impression the latter was a Spanish cruiser, out of Lima, and the prisoners, to a man, volunteered to help flog her ! Their services were declined, of course, but the offer appears to have been made in perfect good faith.

running-rigging shot away. She had also two men killed, and six wounded.

After manning the *Hector*, Mr. Downes had but 10 men left in the *Georgiana*; and, including the wounded, he had 73 prisoners. The *Rose* being a dull ship, he threw overboard her guns, and most of her cargo, and parolling his prisoners, he gave her up to them, on condition that they should sail direct for St. Helena. As soon as this arrangement was made, he made sail for Tumbez, to join the *Essex*.

The little fleet now amounted to nine sail, and there was an opportunity to make new arrangements. The *Atlantic* being nearly 100 tons larger than the *Georgiana*, as well as a much faster ship, besides possessing, in a greater degree, every material quality for a cruiser, Mr. Downes and his crew were transferred to her. Twenty guns were mounted in this new sloop of war; she was named the *Essex Junior*, and manned with 60 men. The *Greenwich* was also converted into a store-ship, and all the spare stores of the other vessels were sent on board her. She was also armed with 20 guns, though her crew was merely strong enough to work her.

On the 30th, the fleet sailed, the *Essex* and *Essex Junior* keeping in company, with all the carpenters at work at the latter. On the 4th of July, a general salute was fired, principally with the guns and ammunition of the enemy. On the 9th, the *Essex Junior* parted company, bound to Valparaiso, with the *Hector*, *Catherine*, *Policy*, and *Montezuma*, prizes, and the *Barclay*, recaptured ship, under convoy.

As soon as out of sight of the other ships, the *Essex*, *Greenwich*, and *Georgiana* steered to the westward, with an intention of going among the Gallipagos. On the 13th, three sail were made off Banks' Bay, all on a wind, and a good deal separated. The *Essex* gave chase to the one in the centre, which led her down to leeward, leaving the *Greenwich* and *Georgiana* a long distance astern and to windward. While the frigate was thus separated from her prizes, one of the strangers tacked, and endeavoured to cut the latter off, but the *Greenwich* hove-to, got a portion of the people out of the *Georgiana*, and bore down boldly on her adversary; while the *Essex* continued after the vessel she was chasing, which she soon captured. The ship was the English whaler *Charlton*, of 274 tons, 10 guns, and 21 men. Throwing a crew into her, the frigate immediately hauled her wind.

It was now ascertained from the prisoners, that the largest of the strange ships was the *Seringapatam*, of 357 tons, 14 guns, and near 40 men; and the smallest, the *New Zealander*, of 259 tons, 8 guns, and 23 men. The *Seringapatam* had been built for a cruiser, and she was probably the most dangerous vessel to the American trade to the westward of Cape Horn. Captain Porter felt a corresponding desire to get possession of her, and was much gratified with the bold manner in which the *Greenwich* had borne down on her. This ship was under the command of a very young officer, but he had the advice of one of the sea-lieutenants, who was under suspension, and

who behaved with great gallantry and spirit on this occasion. Closing with the Seringapatam, the Essex being a long distance to leeward, the Greenwich brought her to action, and after a few broadsides, the English ship struck. Soon after, however, and before possession could be taken, she made an attempt to escape by passing to windward, in which she was frustrated by the perseverance of the Greenwich, which vessel kept close on the enemy's quarter, maintaining a spirited fire, for the number of men on board. As the Essex was coming up fast, the Seringapatam finally gave up the attempt, and running down to the frigate, again submitted.

In this affair, as in that of the boats, and in the capture of the Hector by the Georgiana, the officers and men engaged merited high encomiums for their intrepidity and coolness. The Greenwich, after obtaining the hands from the Georgiana, did not probably muster five-and-twenty men at quarters, and the Seringapatam was much the better ship. The New Zealander was taken without any difficulty.

The Seringapatam had made one prize, her master having turned his attention more to cruising than to whaling. On inquiry, notwithstanding, it was found that he had adopted this course in anticipation of a commission, having actually sailed without one. When this fact was ascertained, Captain Porter put the master in irons, and he subsequently sent him to America to be tried. Finding himself embarrassed with his prisoners, Captain Porter gave them up the Charlton, and suffered them to proceed to Rio de Janeiro, under their parole. He then took the guns out of the New Zealander, and mounted them in the Seringapatam, by which means he gave the latter ship an armament of 22 guns, though, as in the case of the Greenwich, her people were barely sufficient to work her.

On the 25th of July, the Georgiana was despatched to the United States, with a full cargo of oil. In making up a crew for her, an opportunity was found of sounding the feeling of the men whose times were nearly expired, and it was ascertained that few wished to profit by the circumstance. As soon as the vessels separated, the Essex, with the Greenwich, Seringapatam, and New Zealander in company, shaped her course for Albemarle Island. On the morning of the 28th, another strange sail was discovered; but as she had a fresh breeze, and the frigate was becalmed, she was soon out of sight. When the wind came, however, the Essex ran in a direction to intercept the stranger; and the next morning he was again seen, from the mast-head, standing across the Essex's bows, on a bowline. As the wind was light, recourse was now had to the drags,* and the ship got within four miles of the chase, which was evidently an enemy's whaler. The stranger becoming alarmed, got his boats ahead to tow, when Captain Porter sent a gig and whale-boat, with a few good

*These drags were an invention of Captain Porter's, and were often used during the cruise. A triangular canvass paddle, that had weights on one side, was connected with the spritsail-yard and an out-rigger aft. When hauled upon aft, it forced the ship ahead, and a tricing line drew it forward again on the surface of the water, in the manner of a log-chip. The Essex could be urged through the water two knots by this process, though it was found to be excessively laborious.

marksmen in them, under Acting Lieutenant M'Knight, with orders to take a position ahead of the chase, and to drive in her boats, but on no account to attempt to board. This duty was handsomely executed, though the boats had great difficulty in maintaining their position within musket-shot, as the enemy got two guns on the fore-castle, and kept up a warm discharge of grape.

At 4 P. M., the ships were little more than a league apart, perfectly becalmed, and Captain Porter ordered the boats into the water, to carry the stranger by boarding. As the party drew near, the enemy commenced firing, but, intimidated by their steady and orderly approach, he soon lowered his ensign. The boats were about to take possession, when a breeze from the eastward suddenly striking the English ship, she hauled up close on a wind, hoisted her colours again, fired at the gig and whale-boat as she passed quite near them, and went off, at a rapid rate, to the northward. The party attempted to follow, but it was sunset before the Essex got the wind, and, disliking to leave her boats out in the darkness, she was compelled to heave to, at 9, in order to hoist them in. The next morning the chase was out of sight.

This was the first instance, since her arrival in the Pacific, in which the Essex had failed in getting alongside of a chase that she did not voluntarily abandon. It produced much mortification, though the escape of the enemy was owing to one of those occurrences, so common in summer, that leave one ship without a breath of air, while another, quite near her, has a good breeze.

On the 4th of August, the ships went into James's Island and anchored. Here Captain Porter made the important discovery that a large portion of his powder had been damaged in doubling Cape Horn. Fortunately, the Seringapatam could supply the deficiency, though, in doing so, that ship was rendered nearly defenceless. On the 22d of August, all the vessels proceeded to Banks' Bay, where the prizes were moored, and the Essex sailed on a short cruise, alone, on the 24th.

After passing among the islands, without meeting any thing, a sail was discovered on the morning of the 15th of September, apparently lying to, a long distance to the southward and to windward. The Essex was immediately disguised, by sending down some of the light yards, and the ship kept turning to windward, under easy sail. At meridian, the vessels were so near each other, that the stranger was ascertained to be a whaler, in the act of cutting in. He was evidently drifting down fast on the frigate. At 1 P. M. when the ships were about four miles apart, the stranger cast off from the whales, and made all sail to windward. As it was now evident that he had taken the alarm, the Essex threw aside all attempts at disguise, and pursued him, under every thing that would draw. By 4 P. M. the frigate had the stranger within reach of her guns, and a few shot well thrown, brought him down under her lee. This ship was the Sir Andrew Hammond, of 301 tons, 12 guns, and 31 men; and she proved to be the vessel that had escaped, in the manner previously related. Fortunately, the prize had a large supply of excellent beef,

pork, bread, wood, and water, and the *Essex* got out of her an ample stock of those great necessities. On returning to Banks' Bay with her prize, the ship shortly after was joined by the *Essex Junior*, on her return from Valparaiso. By this arrival, Captain Porter discovered that several enemy's vessels of force had sailed in pursuit of him; and having by this time captured nearly all the English whalers of which he could obtain intelligence, he determined to proceed to the Marquesas, in order to refit, and to make his preparations for returning to America. He was urged to adopt this resolution, also, by understanding from Mr. Downes, that the government of Chili no longer preserved the appearance of amity towards the United States, but was getting to be English in its predilections.

CHAPTER IX.

Capt. Porter, with his ships, puts in at Nooaheevah to overhaul—Brief notice of the *Essex* and her service—The *New Zealander*, with oil despatched for America—Fort built at Nooaheevah and Lieut. Gamble put in command—The *Essex* and *Essex Junior* depart for the coast of South America—Arrival of the British ships *Phœbe* and *Cherub*, while anchored at Valparaiso—Putting out to sea, the *Essex* is struck by a squall—She regains the port—Attack on the *Essex* by the *Phœbe* and *Cherub*—Surrender of the *Essex*—The *Essex Junior* proceeds to America as a cartel—Fate of the party left at Nooaheevah.

On the 23d of October, the group of the Marquesas was made from the mast-head of the *Essex*, and after passing among the islands for a few days, Captain Porter took his ships into a fine bay of Nooaheevah, where he anchored. Here he was soon after joined by the *Essex Junior*, which vessel had parted company to cruise, when he believed himself sufficiently secure, to commence a regular overhauling of the different ships.

The situation of the *Essex* was sufficiently remarkable, at this moment, to merit a brief notice. She had been the first American to carry the pennant of a man-of-war round the Cape of Good Hope, and now she had been the first to bring it into this distant ocean. More than ten thousand miles from home, without colonies, stations, or even a really friendly port to repair to, short of stores, without a consort, and otherwise in possession of none of the required means of subsistence and efficiency, she had boldly steered into this distant region, where she had found all that she required, through her own activity; and having swept the seas of her enemies, she had now retired to these little-frequented islands to refit, with the security of a ship at home. It is due to the officer, who so promptly adopted, and so successfully executed this plan, to add, that his enterprise, self-reliance and skill, indicated a man of bold and masculine conception, of great resources, and of a high degree of moral courage; qualities that are indispensable in forming a naval captain.

In the way of service to the public, perhaps the greatest performed by the *Essex* was in protecting the American ships in the Pacific, nearly all of which would probably have fallen into the hands of the enemy, but for her appearance in that ocean. But the positive injury done the English commerce was far from trifling. The *Essex* had now captured about 4000 tons of its shipping, made near 400 prisoners, and for the moment had literally destroyed its fisheries in this part of the world. In October, 1812, she had sailed from America alone, with six months' provisions and the usual stores in her; and in October, 1813, she was lying, in perfect security, at an island of the Pacific, with a respectable consort, surrounded by prizes, and in possession of all the means that were necessary to render a frigate of her class efficient. Throughout the whole of these movements, we see a constant tendency to distress the enemy, and to maintain the character of the ship as an active, well organized, and high-toned man-of-war.

It is an incident worthy of being mentioned in the history of this unusual cruise, that when the *Essex* stood into the land, in first approaching the Marquesas, a boat came off with three white men in her, one of whom proved to be Mr. John Maury, a midshipman of the navy, who had been left by the master of an American trader, himself a lieutenant in the service, to gather sandal-wood while the ship was gone to China. As it was supposed the war would prevent the return of his ship, Mr. Maury and his party were received on board the frigate.*

The island of Nooaheevah, on which Captain Porter landed his stores, was intersected by valleys, and different tribes possessed them, forming distinct communities, which not unfrequently waged war on each other, converting this little and retired fragment of the earth into an epitome of the passions and struggles of the world beyond it. In consequence of his intimate connexion with the inhabitants of the valley in which he was accidentally thrown, Captain Porter was compelled to join in these hostilities, the assailants of his allies beginning to treat him as an enemy. After some fruitless negotiating, a party was sent against the hostile tribe, and several conflicts occurred, in which the armed seamen and marines preailed, as a matter of course, though not without a sharp resistance. This success quieted the island; and during the remainder of his stay Captain Porter appears to have been unmolested.

It has been seen, that the *Essex* reached the Marquesas at the close of October, and in the early part of December she was again ready for sea. In the course of November, the *New Zealander* was filled with oil, from the other prizes, and despatched for America, under the charge of a master's mate.† Shortly after, a fort was constructed on a small conical hill, near the water, when the *Seringapatam*,

* The officer in command of the merchantman was Mr. Lewis, then a lieutenant, and subsequently a master and commander. Mr. Maury was promoted not long after, and lost his life by yellow fever while first lieutenant of a vessel on the West India station. Both these gentlemen were much respected in the service.

† Both the *Georgiana* and *New Zealander* were recaptured on the American coast.

Sir Andrew Hammond, and Greenwich, were warped close in, and moored under its guns. The command of this fort was given to Lieutenant John M. Gamble, of the marines, a 'spirited and intelligent young officer; and Messrs. Feltus and Clapp, two of the midshipmen, with twenty-one men, were put under his orders, having volunteered to remain on the island during the contemplated cruise of the *Essex*. This arrangement was made to secure the means of future repairs, as it was now believed that no more whalers were to be found, and the *Essex* was going to sea, in the expectation of meeting one of the frigates that it was known had been sent into the Pacific, in pursuit of her.

The *Essex*, and *Essex Junior*, quitted the harbour of Nooaheevah, on the 12th of December, 1813, bound for the coast of South America, which was made early in January. After watering at San Maria, and looking into Conception, the ships proceeded to Valparaiso. Up to this time, not a dollar had been drawn for, to meet the expenses of the frigate. The enemy had furnished provisions, sails, cordage, medicines, guns, anchors, cables, and slops. A considerable amount of pay even had been given to the officers and men, by means of the money taken in the *Nocton*. Thus far, the cruise had been singularly useful and fortunate, affording an instance of the perfection of a naval warfare, in all that relates to distressing an enemy, with the least possible charge to the assailants; and it remained only to terminate it with a victory, over a ship of equal force, to render it brilliant. It is, perhaps, a higher eulogium on the officers and crew of this memorable little frigate to add, that while her good fortune appeared at last to desert her, they gave this character to their enterprise, by the manner in which they struggled with adversity.

After the arrival at Valparaiso, it was found that the feelings of the Chilian government had taken an entirely new direction, as had been reported by Mr. Downes, favouring on all occasions the interests of the English, in preference to those of the Americans. Without paying much regard to this circumstance, however, Captain Porter determined to remain in, or off, the port, in waiting for the *Phœbe* 36, Captain Hillyar, one of the ships sent out in quest of him, under the impression that her commander would not fail, sooner or later, to seek him at that place. There was also the prospect of intercepting such of the English traders as might happen to touch at that port.

The *Phœbe* arrived as was expected, but instead of coming alone, she had the *Cherub* 20, Captain Tucker, in company. When these ships hove in sight, the *Essex Junior* was cruising off the harbour, and she came in and anchored. As the *Phœbe* alone was a vessel of a heavier rate than the *Essex*, this addition to her force put a conflict between the four ships quite out of the question. Captain Porter, who had every opportunity of observing the armaments of the two English vessels, states, in his official communications to the department, that the *Phœbe* mounted 30 long eighteens, 16 thirty-two-pound carronades, with 1 howitzer, and 6 threes in her tops. This was a forced equipment for a ship of her rate, but she had probably

taken in extra guns with a view to meet the *Essex*.^{*} Her crew is said to have consisted of 320 souls. The *Cherub* 20, mounted 18 thirty-two-pound carronades below, with 8 twenty-four-pound carronades and 2 long nines above, making a total of 28 guns, and her crew mustered 180 men and boys. In consequence of the number of prizes that had been manned, some deaths that had occurred, and the people placed in the *Essex Junior*, the American frigate could muster but 255 souls, notwithstanding the enlistments she had made from the whalers. The force of the *Essex Junior* was too inconsiderable to be relied on, in an action against ships of a metal as heavy as that of the enemy. She mounted 10 eighteen-pound carronades and 10 short sixes, with a crew of 60 souls. Her guns would have been of little service in a frigate action.

As the *Phœbe* came in, the wind was light, and she passed quite near the *Essex*, with her people at quarters. Captain Hillyar hailed, and inquired after the health of Captain Porter. After making the usual reply, the latter informed the English officer that if the vessels got foul, much confusion would ensue, and that he could not be answerable for the consequences. Captain Hillyar now observed that he did not meditate any attack, though the manner in which this was uttered, does not appear to have quieted the suspicions of the American officers. While the two vessels and their crews were in this novel position, the *Phœbe* was taken suddenly aback, and her bows payed off directly upon the *Essex*. Captain Porter immediately called away his boarders, and for a few minutes there was every appearance of a combat in a neutral port.

A great deal of confusion is said to have existed on board the *Phœbe*, and her commander was earnest in his protestations of an intention not to have recourse to hostilities, while he handled his yards in a way to get a stern-board on his ship. As she fell off, the jib-boom of the *Phœbe* passed over the *Essex*'s deck, and she lay, for a short time, with her bows exposed to the whole broadside of the American frigate, and her stern to that of the *Essex Junior*. Captain Porter declining to profit by this advantage, the *Phœbe* was enabled to get out of her awkward situation, there being no doubt that she had lain entirely at the mercy of her enemies. There can be little question that this extraordinary occurrence would have fully justified the American ship in having recourse to her means of defence.†

^{*} The regular armament of an English 36 would have been 26 long eighteens below, 16 thirty-two-pound carronades and 2 chase guns above, or 44 guns in all. It would seem that the *Phœbe* had added two eighteens, making 46. The regular armament of a 32, was 26 long twelves below, 16 thirty-two-pound carronades and 2 chase guns above. Some thirty-twos, however, mount but 40 guns, the difference in the rate depending more on the metal than on the number of the guns. As a rule, the long twelve is thought to be the equivalent of a thirty-two-pound carronade, though there are circumstances in which each is preferable to the other. The *Essex* had in her, on this occasion, 40 thirty-two-pound carronades, and 6 long twelves. Even with this change, the *Phœbe* was probably her superior, under the ordinary chances of naval warfare, in the proportion of about four to three.

† From all that passed, then and subsequently, the officers of the *Essex* appear to have been generally persuaded that Captain Hillyar had positive orders to capture the American ship, without regard to the neutrality of the South American ports.

The English ships, having obtained some supplies, went outside, and cruised off Valparaiso for six weeks. During this time, the *Essex* made several attempts to engage the *Phœbe* alone, sometimes by bringing her to action with the *Essex Junior* in company, and at others, by bringing her to action singly, having the crew of the *Essex Junior* on board the frigate. Captain Porter ascertained to his satisfaction, that he could easily outsail either of the enemy's vessels, but his object was not so much to escape, as to capture the *Phœbe*, which he had reason to think he might do, could he bring her to close action, without her consort's interference. On the 27th of February, the *Cherub* being nearly a league dead to leeward of her, the *Phœbe* ran close in, hove to off the port, hoisted a motto flag, and fired a gun to windward, when the *Essex* immediately weighed and stood out of the harbour, and answered the weather gun of the enemy. On this occasion, the ships got within gun-shot of each other, and the American frigate opened her fire, when the *Phœbe* ran down and joined her consort. This conduct excited a good deal of feeling among the officers of the *Essex*, who rightly judged that the challenge should not have been given, if it were not the intention of the enemy to engage singly. Taking all these circumstances in connexion, there can be little question that Captain Hillyar had been positively instructed not to fight the *Essex* alone, if he could possibly avoid it. As he bore the character of a good and brave officer, it is not easy to find any other reasonable solution of the course he pursued. His challenge off the port, was probably intended as a *ruse de guerre*, to get the *Essex* into his power; for demonstrations of this nature are not subject to the severe laws which regulate more precise defiance to combat.*

In the course of the expedients adopted by Captain Porter to obtain an advantage over his enemies, he went out one dark night, in his boats, in the hope of being able to board and carry the *Cherub*. Some accidental cause prevented the meeting, and no opportunity offered afterwards to renew the attempt.

Having heard that several other cruisers of the enemy might soon be expected, Captain Porter now determined to go to sea, on the first good occasion, and by leading the *Phœbe* and *Cherub* off the coast, to allow the *Essex Junior* to follow. This plan was formed on the 27th of March, and the very next day the wind came on to blow fresh from the southward, when the *Essex* parted her larboard bower, and dragged the other anchor directly out to sea. The harbour of Valparaiso opens to the northward, being formed by a headland on its western side, and a cove that makes to the southward within it; the main coast sweeping round to the north and east again,

* In consequence of this affair, some explanations passed between the ships, when the English officer alledged that the gun to windward had been fired as a signal to the *Cherub*. This is quite possible, but under the peculiar circumstances, little doubt exists that Captain Hillyar acted under precise instructions not to engage the *Essex* singly. No stress ought to be laid on the different challenges that passed between the American and English ships, as they might all be satisfactorily explained, perhaps; but no incident of the war so unanswerably shows the character obtained by the American navy, at this time, as the fact that a 36 declined meeting a 32, in single combat. Two years earlier, the *Cherub* would probably have sought an action with the *Essex*.

affording the necessary protection. On the 28th of March, when the accident just mentioned occurred, the enemy's ships were at no great distance off the point, though far enough to allow the *Essex* to fetch past to windward of them, by hugging the land. The Point of Angels, however, is an exceedingly dangerous bluff to double, and most ships deem it prudent to reef before going round it, on account of the liability to sudden and violent squalls.

As there was no time to lose, sail was got on the *Essex*, when on opening the enemy, Captain Porter took in his topgallant-sails, hauled close by the wind, and made an attempt to pass out, by keeping his weatherly position. Every thing looked promising for a short time; and there is little question that the ship would have gone clear, but, in doubling the headland, a squall carried away the main-topmast, throwing several men into the sea, all of whom were drowned. Nothing remained, of course, but to endeavour to regain the port, or to fight both the enemy's ships, under the additional disadvantage of being already crippled.

Finding it impossible to beat up to the common anchorage, in his present condition, in time to avoid the enemy, Captain Porter stood across the entrance of the harbour, to its northeastern side, where he let go an anchor, about three miles from the town, a mile and a half from the *Castello Viego*, which, however, was concealed by a bluff, half a mile from a detached battery of one twenty-four-pound gun, and within pistol-shot of the shore. Notwithstanding this position, the enemy continued to approach, and it soon became evident, by the motto flags and jacks he set, that it was his serious intention to engage. The *Essex*, in consequence, cleared for action, and attempted to get a spring on her cable, but had not succeeded in effecting this important object, when the *Phœbe*, having obtained an advantageous position, nearly astern, about 4 P. M. opened her fire, at long shot. At the same time, the *Cherub* commenced the action on the starboard bow. The fire of the *Phœbe*, from the double advantage she possessed in her long guns and her station, became very destructive, as scarce a gun from the *Essex* could touch her. The *Cherub*, however, was soon driven off, when she ran down to leeward, and engaged from a position near that taken by the *Phœbe*. Three long twelves were got out aft, and they played with so much effect on the enemy, that at the end of half an hour, both his ships hauled off the land to repair damages. This important fact, which is affirmed by the Americans, is sufficiently corroborated by the accounts of the enemy.*

During this first attack, the *Essex*, through the great exertions of the master and boatswain, had succeeded in getting springs on the cable no less than three different times, but before the ship's broadside could be sprung to bear, they were as often shot away. The ship also received a great deal of injury, and several men had been killed, and wounded. Notwithstanding all the disastrous circumstances under which they engaged, and the superior force opposed to them,

* It is due to the English commander to say, that he gave a very frank and fair account of the action.

the officers and crew of the *Essex* were animated by the best spirit, and it was not possible for efforts to be more coolly made, or better directed.

The enemy was not long in making his repairs, and both ships next took a position on the starboard quarter of the *Essex*, where it was not in the power of the latter vessel to bring a single gun to bear upon him, as he was too distant to be reached by carronades. His fire was very galling, and it left no alternative to Captain Porter, between submission, and running down to assail him. He gallantly decided on the latter. But, by this time, the *Essex* had received many serious injuries, in addition to the loss of her topmast. Her topsail sheets, topsail halyards, jib and foretopmast staysail halyards had all been shot away. The only sail that could be got upon the ship to make her head pay off was the flying jib, which was hoisted, when the cable was cut, and the vessel edged away, with the intention of laying the *Phœbe* aboard.

The fore-topsail and foresail were now let fall, though, for want of tacks and sheets, they were nearly useless. Still the *Essex* drove down on her assailants, closing near enough to open with her carronades. For a few minutes, the firing on both sides was tremendous, the people of the *Essex* proving their discipline and gallantry, at that trying moment, in a way to justify all the high expectations that had been formed of them, though their decks were already strewn with killed, and the cockpit was crowded with the wounded. This work proved too hot for the *Cherub*, which hauled off a second time, nor did she come near enough to use her carronades again, during the remainder of the action, keeping up a distant fire with her long guns.

The *Phœbe* discovered no disposition to throw away the immense advantage she possessed, in her long eighteens; and when she found the *Essex*'s fire becoming warm, she kept edging off, throwing her shot at the same time with fatal effect, cutting down the people of her antagonist, almost with impunity to herself. By this time, many of the guns of the American ship were disabled, and the crews of several had been swept away. One particular gun was a scene of carnage that is seldom witnessed in a naval combat, nearly three entire crews falling at it in the course of the action. Its captain alone escaped with a slight wound.

This scene of almost unresisted carnage had now lasted almost two hours, and, finding it impossible to close with his adversary, who chose his distance at pleasure, Captain Porter felt the necessity of taking some prompt measure, if he would prevent the enemy from getting possession of his ship. The wind had got more to the westward, and he saw a hope of running her ashore, at a spot where he might land his people and set her on fire. For a few minutes every thing appeared to favour this design, and the *Essex* had drifted within musket-shot of the beach, when the wind suddenly shifted from the land, paying the ship's head broad off, in a way to leave her exposed to a dreadful raking fire. Still, as she was again closing with the *Phœbe*, Captain Porter indulged a hope of finally laying that ship

aboard. At this moment, Lieutenant Commandant Downes came alongside of the *Essex*, in order to receive the orders of his commanding officer, having pulled through all the fire in order to effect this object. He could be of no use, for the enemy again put his helm up, and kept away, when Mr. Downes, after remaining in the *Essex* ten minutes, was directed to return to his own ship, and to make preparations to defend, or, at need to destroy her. On going away, he carried off several of the *Essex*'s wounded, leaving three of his own men behind him, in order to make room in the boat.

The slaughter in the *Essex* having got to be too horrible, the enemy firing with deliberation, and hulling her at almost every shot, Captain Porter, as a last resort, ordered a hawser to be bent to the sheet anchor, and the latter let go, in order to bring the head of the ship round. This effected the object, and once more the Americans got their broadside to bear, remaining stationary themselves, while their enemy, a good deal crippled, was drifting slowly to leeward. Even in these desperate circumstances, a ray of hope gleamed through this little advantage, and Captain Porter was beginning to believe that the *Phœbe* would drift out of gun-shot, before she discovered his expedient, when the hawser parted with the strain.

There was no longer any chance of saving the ship. To add to her distress, she was on fire, the flames coming up both the main and forward hatchways; and for a few minutes it was thought she must consume. An explosion of powder also occurred below, to add to the horrors of the scene, and Captain Porter told his people, that in preference to being blown up, all who chose to incur the risk, might make the attempt to reach the shore by swimming. Many availed themselves of the permission, and some succeeded in effecting their escape. Others perished, while a few, after drifting about on bits of spars, were picked up by the boats of the enemy. Much the greater part of the crew, however, remained in the ship, and they set about an attempt to extinguish the flames; the shot of the enemy committing its havoc the whole time. Fortunately, the fire was got under, when the few brave men who were left, went again to the long guns.

The moment had now arrived, when Captain Porter was to decide between submission or the destruction of the remainder of his people. In the midst of this scene of slaughter, he had himself been untouched, and it would seem that he felt himself called on to resist as long as his own strength allowed. But his remaining people entreated him to remember his wounded, and he at last consented to summon his officers. Only one, Acting Lieutenant M'Knight, could join him on the quarter-deck! The first lieutenant, Mr. Wilmer, had been knocked overboard by a splinter, and drowned, while getting the sheet anchor from the bows; Acting Lieutenant Cowell, the next in rank, was mortally wounded; Acting Lieutenant Odenheimer had just been knocked overboard from the quarter, and did not regain the vessel for several minutes. The reports of the state of the ship were fearful. A large portion of the guns were disabled, even had there been men left to fight them. The berth-deck, steerage,

ward-room, and cockpit, were full of wounded; and the latter were even killed by shot while under the surgeon's hands. The carpenter was sent for, and he stated that of his crew, he alone could perform any duty. He had been over the side to stop shot-holes, when his slings were cut away, and he narrowly escaped drowning. In short, seventy-five men, officers included, were all that remained for duty; and the enemy, in perfectly smooth water, was firing his long eighteens, at a nearly unresisting ship, with as much precision as he could have discharged them at a target. It had become an imperative duty to strike, and the colours were accordingly hauled down, after one of the most remarkable combats that is to be found in the history of naval warfare.

In this bloody contest, the *Essex* had 58 men killed, including those who soon died of their hurts, and 66 wounded, making a total of 124, or nearly half of all who were on board at the commencement of the action. Of the missing there were 31, most of whom were probably drowned, either in attempting to swim ashore, when the ship was on fire, or by being knocked overboard by the splinters, or pieces of the rigging. Including the missing, the entire loss was 152, out of 255.

The *Essex*, with a very trifling exception while closing, fought this battle with her six long twelves, opposed by fifteen long eighteens in broadside,* the long guns of the *Cherub*, and, a good deal of the time, or while they lay on her quarter, by the carronades of both the enemy's ships. Captain Hillyar's published official letter makes the loss of the *Phœbe* 4 killed and 7 wounded; that of the *Cherub*, 1 killed, and 3 wounded. There is no apparent reason for distrusting this account, as Captain Hillyar's official letter was singularly modest and just. Captain Tucker, of the *Cherub* was wounded, and the first lieutenant of the *Phœbe* was killed. The English ships were cut up more than could have been expected under the circumstances, the latter having received no less than eighteen twelve-pound shot below the water-line. It would seem that the smoothness of the water rendered the fire very certain, on both sides, and it is only to be regretted that the *Essex* could not have engaged under her three topsails, from the commencement. The engagement lasted nearly two hours and a half, the long guns of the *Essex*, it is said, having been fired no less than seventy-five times, each, in broadside. The enemy must have thrown, agreeably to the statements made at the time, not less than 700 eighteen-pound shot, at the *Essex*.

The battle was witnessed by thousands from the shore; and so near were all the ships to the land, that, at one time, many of the *Phœbe*'s eighteen-pound shot struck the beach. This fact appears to be well authenticated, and, of itself, it settles the question of a violation of the neutrality of Chili; since even they who maintain the doctrine that jurisdiction does not properly extend three leagues to sea, substitute the greatest range of a shot, or a shell, in their

*It has been said that the *Phœbe* mounted but 26 long eighteens, her upper deck long guns having been twelves. We have followed Captain Porter's account, though the difference, under the peculiar circumstances, was of no great moment.

place. During the action, Mr. Poinsett, the American consul, repaired to the governor's and asked the protection of the batteries in behalf of the *Essex*. He received the evasive answer, that, should the ship succeed in reaching the ordinary anchorage, an officer would be sent to the British commander, requesting him to cease his fire. The governor, however, declined resorting to force, under any circumstances. This conduct left no doubt of a collusion between the English officers and the local authorities, and Mr. Poinsett took the first occasion to quit the country.

In the mode in which he fought his ship, though it was much criticised at the time, Captain Hillyar discovered seamanship and a strict attention to his duty; but his situation must have been in the last degree painful, while compelled to avoid meeting the *Essex* singly, under circumstances that admit of no other plausible construction than an obedience to the most rigid orders.

Captain Porter now entered into an arrangement with Captain Hillyar, under the provisions of which, the *Essex Junior* was converted into a cartel, and a passport was given, by means of which all the survivors of the *Essex* came home. From this arrangement, however, Acting Lieutenant M'Knight, Mr. Adams, the chaplain, and Mr. Lyman, a master's mate, were exempted; these three gentlemen and eleven seamen, being exchanged on the spot, for a part of the people of the *Sir Andrew Hammond*, who were then prisoners in the *Essex Junior*. Mr. M'Knight and Mr. Lyman went round to Rio de Janeiro, in the *Phœbe*, in order to give some testimony in behalf of the captors. We shall have occasion to advert to the two last mentioned gentlemen hereafter.

The *Essex Junior* left Valparaiso shortly after this arrangement, encountering no difficulty in doubling the Horn. She was brought to, off New York, by the *Saturn* rasée, Captain Nash. This officer, at first, questioned the authority of Captain Hillyar to grant the passport, under which the *Essex Junior* was sailing, and he directed that ship to lie by him during the night. After some communications, the next morning, when thirty miles from the beach, Captain Porter put off in a whale-boat, and, though chased, by pulling vigorously for the land, he got ashore on Long Island, escaping in a fog. It does not appear, however, to have been the intention of Captain Nash seriously to detain the *Essex Junior*. He probably distrusted some artifice, as he permitted the ship to proceed, after again examining her papers.

Thus terminated this enterprising and singular cruise, its end proving as disastrous as its commencement had been fortunate, though it was, at all times, highly creditable to the spirit, resources, self-reliance, and zeal of those engaged in it. Before quitting the subject, however, it remains to give a brief account of the fortunes of the officers and men left at *Nooaheevah*, with the three prizes, the *Greenwich*, the *Sir Andrew Hammond*, and the *Seringapatam*, under the orders of Lieutenant Gamble of the marines.

The *Essex* had no sooner disappeared than the savages began to pilfer, and to betray a turbulent disposition. Mr. Gamble was com-

pelled to land a party, and to bring the natives to terms by a show of force. Fortunately this object was effected without firing a musket. In February, one of the small party left was drowned, reducing their number to twenty-two, the officers included. Not long after this event, four of the men deserted in a whale-boat, carrying off with them several small articles of value. But eighteen now remained.

On the 12th of April, Mr. Gamble began to rig the Seringapatam and the Sir Andrew Hammond, with the intention of quitting the islands, the long absence of the Essex inducing him to despair of her return. Some symptoms of a mutiny now began to show themselves, and he had all the arms and ammunition brought on board the Greenwich, in which vessel he lived; but having occasion to be on board the Seringapatam, on the 7th of May, a party of six men rose, and took the ship from him. During the time Mr. Gamble was in the hands of these men, he was badly wounded in the foot by a pistol-ball, and they succeeded in carrying off the Seringapatam, sending the officer, and the people with him, on board another vessel.

Every exertion was made to get to sea with the Sir Andrew Hammond, but on the 9th, the natives made an attack, and Mr. Feltus, with three men, was killed, and one other was severely wounded. The situation of those that remained, now became exceedingly critical, the whole party consisting of only eight individuals, of whom two were badly wounded, one was crippled, and another was just recovering from a serious attack of the scurvy. In fact, there were but four men on board the Sir Andrew Hammond fit for duty. The jib and spanker were bent as fast as possible, the moorings were cut, and, under that short sail, the ship passed slowly out to sea, under cover of the night. When safe in the offing, but six cartridges were left, the Seringapatam having carried off most of the ammunition in kegs.

To add to the difficulties of his situation, Mr. Gamble had no chart. He made out to reach the Sandwich Islands, however, in seventeen days, where he was captured by the Cherub, and first learned the fate of the Essex. The Americans continued seven months in this ship, until they were landed at Rio de Janeiro, from which port Mr. Gamble got to New York, late in August, 1815.

Having closed the history of the three ships that sailed under the orders of Commodore Bainbridge, it becomes necessary to return to the commencement of the year 1812, deferring, however, an account of the proceedings on the lakes, to another portion of the work, in order to preserve the connexion that is necessary to clearness and interest.

CHAPTER X.

Imperfect condition of certain ships of the navy—Equipment of the *Constellation*—she is blockaded by a British fleet at Hampton Roads—Skillful preparations for her defence, by Capt. Stewart—Compliment paid him by the British officers—He is transferred to the *Constitution*—Cruise of the Chesapeake, Capt. Evans—she captures four merchantmen—Change in the policy of the enemy with regard to the eastern states—Contemplated cruise of the Chesapeake, Capt. Lawrence—Disaffection among her crew—Her action with and capture by the British ship *Shannon*—Death of Capt. Lawrence—Sketch of his life.

THE effect of the successes of the navy on the public mind, has been already shown. The nation was well disposed to contribute freely to the enlargement of this branch of the general service; and, encouraged by this feeling, the administration had so far extended its policy as to recommend the construction of four ships of the line. Although few of the more important political objects of a war can be looked for without vessels of force, it may be questioned if, under the particular circumstances of the country, the building of heavy ships, at that precise moment, was the wisest policy that could be adopted. The public finances were hardly in a state to meet the sudden and heavy demands that a fleet of any force would make, and to put to sea a few solitary two-deckers, out of distant ports, to cruise without concert, would have been to betray a great want of the ability to combine, as well as a singular feebleness of purpose. The first object to be obtained by vessels of force would be to prevent blockades, and to render descents on the coast too hazardous to be attempted. Failing in the means to effect these important ends, or at least to render an attempt to thwart them too precarious in the eyes of the enemy, a discreet view of the interests of the country would seem to point out the expediency of adopting a different species of force, in order to insure the next most practicable benefit that circumstances allowed. When a community neglects the golden opportunity for achieving any important measure, like an individual similarly situated, it must be content to do all it can, and to abandon the design of doing what it desires. Such, virtually, was the condition of America at that moment; and, while the governing necessity of possessing vessels of force, ought never to be lost sight of, among a maritime people, it may well be doubted whether the money expended in constructing two or three large ships, during the years 1813 and 1814, might not have been more discreetly used in fitting out fifteen or twenty fast-sailing light cruisers; vessels that might have been built and equipped in a few weeks, and which would be almost certain of getting to sea.*

It has been seen, that the declaration of war found the naval preparations in so imperfect a condition, that the *Constellation* 38, Ches-

* It is worthy of remark that, while three of the eight efficient frigates the United States owned soon after the commencement of the war (including one captured from the enemy,) were blockaded, no sloop of war was prevented from getting to sea. The first great object of the government should be to prevent blockades altogether; its next, to employ vessels that cannot be blockaded.

apeake 38, and Adams 28, were not ready even to receive crews, while it was found necessary to rebuild entirely the New York 36, Boston 28, and General Greene 28. The appropriations for the repairs of the three first ships having been made in March, 1812, the *Constellation* was equipped and manned at Washington, in the course of the season. When Commodore Bainbridge left her for the *Constitution*, the command of this ship had been given to Captain Stewart, the officer who had served as second in command under Commodore Preble, during most of the operations of that celebrated captain, before Tripoli. In the course of the month of January, 1813, Captain Stewart dropped down the river with an intention to get to sea, but on reaching St. Mary's, an order was received, that induced him to go to Annapolis, in order to examine his powder. From this place, the ship was directed to proceed to Norfolk. In executing this order, the *Constellation* anchored in Hampton Roads, and the next morning a fleet of the enemy, consisting of several two-decked ships, frigates and sloops of war, came in and anchored off Willoughby's Point, where they were becalmed. While the English ships were waiting for the turn of the tide, the *Constellation* was kedged up until she grounded on the flats above, and the same night, when the tide floated her, she was carried up, and anchored between the forts at Norfolk.

A few days later, the *Constellation* dropped down abreast of Craney Island, with a view to cover the fortifications then erecting at that place. At this time, the enemy was still lying in force at Hampton Roads. The ship was much exposed, it being at all times practicable for the enemy to attempt carrying her by surprise, and Captain Stewart felt the necessity of using great precautions for her protection. As the manner in which the frigate was prepared for defence, on this occasion, was highly appreciated for its skilful and seamanlike dispositions, it is thought worthy of being particularly mentioned.

The *Constellation* was anchored in the middle of the channel, which is quite narrow, and on each side of her were moored seven gun-boats, on board of which were placed officers and men belonging to the ship. A circle of booms, securely fastened, protected the gun-boats from being boarded, which would enable them to maintain a flanking fire, on all assailants of the frigate. The gun-deck guns of the latter were housed, and the ports were shut in. Great care was taken that no rope should be permitted to be hanging over the side of the vessel, the stern ladders were taken away, and even the gangway-cleets were removed. Boarding nettings were made of twenty-one thread ratlin-stuff, that had been boiled in half-made pitch, which rendered it so hard as almost to defy the knife. To give greater strength, nail rods and small chains were secured to the netting in lines about three feet apart. Instead of tricing to the rigging, this netting was spread out-board, towards the yard-arms, rising about twenty-five feet above the deck. To the outer rope or ridge-line of the netting, were secured pieces of kentledge, that by cutting

the tricing lines when the enemy should get alongside, his boats and men might be caught beneath. Pieces of kentledge were also suspended forward, from the spritsail-yard, bowsprit, &c. &c., to prevent boats from lying under them, while the netting was here hoisted to the fore stay. The carronades were charged to the muzzles with musket-balls, and depressed to the nearest range, in order to sweep around the ship. As the frigate was light, and unusually high out of water, it was the opinion of the best judges, that defended as she would certainly have been, under the officers who were in her, she could not have been carried without a loss of several hundred men to the enemy, if she could have been carried by boats at all.

It would appear, notwithstanding, that the enemy was disposed to make the attempt. A large force of British ships having collected in the Roads, the admirals in command seriously contemplated an assault on the *Constellation*. Fortunately, Captain Stewart received notice of their intentions. A Portuguese had been stopped by the fleet, on his way to sea, and his ship was anchored at the upper part of the Roads, just out of gun-shot of the frigate. On board this vessel, the admiral kept a guard and a look-out, to signal the movements above. An American passenger, on board the Portuguese, learned from the conversation of different officers, their designs on the *Constellation*, and he found means to get on board the frigate in order to apprise her commander of the enemy's plan, handsomely volunteering to remain in the ship to help defend her.* Of course the guard-boats were enjoined to be more than usually vigilant, and every thing was got ready to receive the enemy.

The night succeeding the notice was starlight, and nothing was attempted. The next morning, the master of the Portuguese stopped alongside of the frigate, on his way to Norfolk, and stated that a large number of boats had collected at his ship the previous evening, but that the expedition had been deferred until that night, which promised to be dark and drizzling. Accordingly the guard-boat was on the look-out, and it fell in with a division of boats, that was supposed to contain from 1500 to 2000 men. As soon as the enemy was seen, the officer in the boat showed two lanterns on the off-side of his cutter, and all hands were called in the ship. It would seem the enemy ascertained that his approach was discovered, and he retired.

The following night, the attempt was renewed, with the same want of success. A few nights later, it again proved dark and drizzling, and a third expedition came up. On this occasion, Mr. B. J. Neale, the second lieutenant of the *Constellation*, was in the guard-boat, and he edged close in with the enemy, who discovered him. As soon as the word of "a stranger," was given, the people of the cutter sprang to their oars, and pulled out of sight, but finding he was not pursued, Mr. Neale returned and kept company with the brigade of boats, which passed up on the inside of the flats, above the mouth of Tanner's creek, and anchored at no great distance below the

* The name of the gentleman deserves to be honourably mentioned. It was Mr. Francis March, of the mercantile firm of J. Howard March & Co., of Madeira.

forts.* Here many of the officers landed, and walked about to keep themselves warm, the guard-boat anchoring also. When the ebb tide made, the brigade returned, the *Constellation's* boat quitting them only when they had got below the frigate.

Shortly after, the fortifications being sufficiently advanced, and block ships being ready for sinking in the channel, the *Constellation* was carried up again to a place of security. About this time Captain Stewart was transferred to the command of the *Constitution 44*, and Captain Tarbell received a temporary appointment to the *Constellation*, though, the enemy always maintaining a strong force in the waters of the Chesapeake, the ship continued to be blockaded until the peace.

The Chesapeake, lying at Boston, had less difficulty in getting to sea, for the enemy did not keep any force before that port, during the first few months of the war; most probably under the false impression that such was the disaffection of the eastern states, that it would virtually be annoying friends. She sailed at the close of February, 1813, under the orders of Captain Evans, and passing by the Canary Isles, and the Cape de Verdes, she crossed the equator, and remained for six weeks near the line. She then made the coast of South America, passed the spot where the *Hornet* sunk the *Peacock*, the day after that action had occurred, and went through the West Indies, and along the American coast, to the port from which she had sailed. During this long run, Captain Evans saw but three men-of-war, a ship of the line and a frigate, near the Western Islands, and a sloop of war, off the Capes of Virginia. The latter escaped in the night, after a chase of two days. The Chesapeake captured four merchant vessels.

This cruise, during which the frigate had been taken, without success, over a part of the ocean much frequented by British cruisers, went far towards confirming that character of being an unlucky ship, which the Chesapeake had always possessed, and neither officers nor sailors were fond of serving in her; for, whatever reason may teach men on such subjects, facts and superstition are usually found to furnish more arguments than logic and common sense.† In entering the harbour, the Chesapeake lost a top-mast, and several men, who were aloft at the time, were drowned. Captain Evans gave up

* As Mr. Neale pulled off, he fired a musket at the enemy, and it is said the ball passed through the jacket of an officer of high rank. This gentleman kept so close to the enemy that he overheard their conversation, which was repeated to them, by the next flag that went down. The English officers confessed that the vigilance of the ship was too much for them, insisting that Captain Stewart must be a *Scotchman*, he was so actively awake. "If the *Constellation* were a Frenchman, we should have had her long ago," observed an officer of very high rank, on that occasion. This might have been so, or not, for the French understand defending a ship at anchor, as well as most nations.

† In the navy, at this particular juncture, the *Constitution*, *Constellation* and *Enterprise* were the *lucky* vessels of the service, and the Chesapeake and *President* the *unlucky*. The different vessels named, went into the war of 1812 with these characters, and they were singularly confirmed by circumstances. Even the fact that the *Constellation* remained blockaded throughout the war, scarcely impaired her character, for it was remarked that the enemy could never get hold of her, and, usually, her officers and men when brought into action, as occurred in several instances, in boats and batteries, were successful.

the command of his ship on his return, on account of his health,* and was succeeded by Captain James Lawrence.

By this time, the enemy had changed his policy as regards the eastern states, and he kept a few frigates in the vicinity of Massachusetts Bay, with a view to intercept the American ships of war that passed in and out. Two of these cruisers, the Shannon 38, and Tenedos 38, had been off Boston, it was said, in waiting for the President 44, and Congress 38, to come out, but these ships had sailed without encountering them, and it was by no means probable that the English seriously wished a meeting. When it was understood, however, that the Chesapeake was ready to sail, the Shannon, Captain Broke, appeared alone in the offing, and as the ships were very fairly matched, a combat appeared much more probable. It is now known, that Captain Broke, that very day, sent in an invitation to Captain Lawrence, to meet him in any latitude and longitude that might be agreed on. Unfortunately, this letter was not written until about the moment the Chesapeake was getting under way, and the advantage of having officers and men accustomed to act a little together, was lost. The Chesapeake's contemplated cruise was to the northward and eastward, with a view to intercept the store-ships and troop-ships that were steering for the St. Lawrence. The Hornet 18, Captain Biddle, had been put under the orders of Captain Lawrence, and it was intended that the two ships should cruise in company.† The Greenland whale-fishery, however, was the ultimate object of these vessels.

In the forenoon of June 1st, 1813, the Shannon appeared in the bay. The Chesapeake was then lying in President Roads, ready for sea; though some disaffection existed among the crew, on account of the prize-money of the last cruise, which was still unpaid. The ship had an unusual number of mercenaries in her; and among others, was a boatswain's mate, a Portuguese, who was found to be particularly troublesome. Under the extraordinary circumstances in which the vessel was placed, it was thought prudent to temporise, and the people were addressed, and some promises were made to them which apparently had the effect of putting them in a better humour.

* Captain Evans had lost the sight of one of his eyes, and that of the other was in great danger.

† In the following letter, the reader will discover the reluctance with which Lawrence sailed in the Chesapeake, besides getting a better idea of the contemplated cruise. It will be seen that the latter resembled the cruise of Paul Jones and of the elder Biddle, in the war of the Revolution. In this letter, however, Captain Lawrence does not go beyond the expected place of meeting of the two ships.

"BOSTON, May 27th, 1813.

"Dear Sir:

"In hopes of being relieved by Captain Stewart, I neglected writing agreeably to promise, but as I have given over all hopes of seeing him, and the Chesapeake is almost ready, I shall sail on Sunday, provided I have a chance of getting out clear of the Shannon and Tenedos, who are on the look-out. My intention is to pass out by Cape Sable, then run out west (east,) until I get into the stream, then haul in for Cape Canso, and run for Cape Breton, where I expect the pleasure of seeing you; I think your best chance of getting out is through the Sound.

"In haste, yours sincerely,

"Captain Biddle."

"J. LAWRENCE.

At 12, meridian, the *Chesapeake* lifted her anchor, and stood out, with a pleasant breeze from the southward and westward. As the *Shannon* was then in plain sight, the ship was cleared for action, and the best appearances were assumed, although it is known that Captain Lawrence went into this engagement with strong reluctance, on account of the peculiar state of his crew. He had himself joined the vessel only a few days before; her proper first lieutenant, Mr. O. A. Page, of Virginia, an officer of experience, was ill on shore, and died soon after, in Boston; the acting first lieutenant, Mr. Augustus Ludlow, of New York, though an officer of merit, was a very young man, and was in an entirely novel situation, and there was but one other commissioned sea-officer in the ship, two of the midshipmen acting as third and fourth lieutenants, and now performing this duty for the first time. One, if not both of these young gentlemen, had also just joined the ship, following the captain from the *Hornet*. In addition, the *Chesapeake* had an unusual number of landsmen in her.

The *Shannon* stood off under easy sail, when Captain Lawrence fired a gun, about half past 4, which induced her to heave to, with her head to the southward and eastward. By this time the wind had freshened, and at 5, the *Chesapeake* took in her royals and topgallant-sails, and half an hour later, she hauled up her courses. The two ships were now about 30 miles from the light, the *Shannon* under single-reefed topsails and jib, and the *Chesapeake* under her whole topsails and jib, coming down fast. As the *Shannon* was running with the wind a little free, there was an anxious moment on board of her, during which it was uncertain on which side the *Chesapeake* was about to close, or whether she might not be disposed to commence the action on her quarter. But Captain Lawrence chose to lay his enemy fairly alongside, yard-arm and yard-arm, and he luffed, and ranged up abeam, on the *Shannon's* starboard side. When the *Chesapeake's* foremast was in a line with the *Shannon's* mizen-mast, the latter ship discharged her cabin guns, and the others in succession, from aft forward. The *Chesapeake* did not fire until all her guns bore, when she delivered a very destructive broadside. For six or eight minutes the cannonading was fierce, and the best of the action, so far as the general effect of the fire was concerned, is said to have been with the American frigate, though it was much in favour of the enemy, in its particular and accidental consequences. While passing the *Shannon's* broadside, the *Chesapeake* had her fore-topsail tie and jib sheet shot away. Her spanker-brails also were loosened, and the sail blew out. These accidents occurring nearly at the same instant, they brought the ship up into the wind, when, taken aback, she got sternway, and fell aboard of the enemy, with her mizen-rigging foul of the *Shannon's* fore-chains. By some accounts, the fluke of an anchor on board the *Shannon* hooked in the rigging of the *Chesapeake*. Whatever may have served to keep the ships together, it appears to be certain, that the American frigate lay exposed to a raking fire from the enemy, who poured into her the contents of one or two carronades, that nearly swept her upper deck. At the few first discharges of the *Shannon*, Captain Lawrence had

received a wound in the leg; Mr. Broom, the marine officer, Mr. Ballard, the acting fourth lieutenant, and the boatswain, were mortally wounded; Mr. White, the master, was killed, and Mr. Ludlow, the first lieutenant, was twice wounded by grape and musketry. Such was the state of the upper deck, as the accident mentioned, brought the vessels in contact. When Captain Lawrence perceived that the ships were likely to fall foul of each other, he directed the boarders to be called, but unfortunately, a bugleman had been substituted for the drummer, and this man, a negro, was so much alarmed at the effects of the conflict, that he had concealed himself under the stern of the launch; when found, he was completely paralysed by fear, and was totally unable to sound a note. Verbal orders were consequently sent below, by the captain's aids, for the boarders to come on deck. At this critical moment Captain Lawrence fell with a ball through the body.

The upper deck was now left without an officer above the rank of a midshipman. It was the practice of the service, in that day, to keep the arms of the boarders on the quarter-deck, and about the masts; and even when the boarders had been summoned in the slow and imperfect manner that, in the confusion of a combat, was allowed by the voice, they were without arms; for, by this time, the enemy was in possession of the Chesapeake's quarter-deck.

As soon as the ships were foul, Captain Broke passed forward in the Shannon, and, to use his own language, "seeing that the enemy were flinching from his guns," he gave the order to board. Finding that all their officers had fallen, and exposed to a raking fire, without the means of returning a shot, the men on the Chesapeake's quarter-deck had indeed left their guns. The marines had suffered severely, and having lost their officer, were undecided what to do, and the entire upper deck was left virtually without any defence.

When the enemy entered the ship, from his fore-channels it was with great caution, and so slowly, that twenty resolute men would have repulsed him. The boarders had not yet appeared from below, and meeting with no resistance, he began to move forward. This critical moment lost the ship, for the English, encouraged by the state of the Chesapeake's upper deck, now rushed forward in numbers, and soon had entire command above board. The remaining officers appeared on deck, and endeavoured to make a rally, but it was altogether too late, for the boatswain's mate mentioned, had removed the gratings of the berth-deck, and had run below, followed by a great many men.* Soon after, the Chesapeake's colours were hauled down by the enemy, who got complete possession of the ship, with very little resistance.

Captain Broke, in his official report of this action, observes that after he had boarded, "the enemy fought desperately, but in disorder." The first part of this statement is probably true, as regards a few gallant individuals on the upper deck, but there was no regular resistance to the boarders of the Shannon at all. The people of the

* As this man performed this act of treachery, he is said to have cried out, "so much for not having paid men their prize-money."

Chesapeake had not the means to resist, neither were they collected, nor commanded in the mode in which they had been trained to act. The enemy fired down the hatches, and killed and wounded a great many men, in this manner, but it does not appear that their fire was returned. Although the English lost a few men when they boarded, it is understood that the slaughter was principally on the side of the Americans, as might be expected, after the assault was made.*

Few naval battles have been more sanguinary than this. It lasted altogether not more than 15 minutes, and yet both ships were charnel houses. The Chesapeake had 48 men killed, and 98 wounded, a large portion of whom fell by the raking fire of the Shannon, after the Chesapeake was taken aback, and by the fire of the boarders. The Shannon had 23 killed and 56 wounded, principally by the Chesapeake's broadsides. It was impossible for ships of that size to approach so near, in tolerably smooth water, and to fire with so much steadiness, without committing great havoc. On board the Chesapeake fell, or died of their wounds shortly after the combat, Captain Lawrence, Lieutenants Ludlow, Ballard, and Broom, (of the marines,) Mr. White, the master, Mr. Adams, the boatswain, and three midshipmen. All but the midshipmen, fell before the enemy boarded. Mr. Budd second, and Mr. Cox, third lieutenant, were wounded after the enemy had got on the Chesapeake's decks. Several midshipmen were also wounded. The Shannon lost her first lieutenant, and one or two inferior officers, and Captain Broke was badly wounded; the boatswain lost an arm, and one midshipman was wounded, mostly after the boarding.

As soon as the ships were clear of each other, they both made sail for Halifax, where they soon after arrived. Captain Lawrence died of his wounds on the 6th of June, and with Mr. Ludlow, was buried by the enemy with military honours.†

* The fact that the English met with no resistance in coming on board the Chesapeake, is fully confirmed by the official account of Captain Broke. This officer, who appears to have behaved with great personal gallantry, was among the first to board, and he says, "having received a sabre wound, *at the first onset*, while charging a part of the enemy, who had rallied on their *forecastle*," &c. &c. The enemy came in *astern*, and the *first onset* occurring on the *forecastle*, it follows that there was no resistance aft.

† James Lawrence was born at Burlington, New Jersey, October 1st, 1781. His father was a respectable lawyer, and it was first intended to educate the son to the same profession, but preferring the sea, he received a midshipman's warrant on the 4th of September, 1798. His first service was in the *Ganges* 24, Captain Tingey. So much aptitude did he show for the profession, that Mr. Lawrence was made an acting lieutenant, by his commander, within two years after he went to sea, though he did not receive a commission until 1802. He was first lieutenant in the *Enterprise* from 1802 to 1804, and distinguished himself in the attack on the feluccas at old Tripoli, in May, 1802, under Mr. Porter. In February, 1804, he accompanied his commander, Lieutenant Commandant Decatur, and the *Enterprise's* ship-company in the attack on the Philadelphia, on which occasion he was second in command, among the party that went in. In 1805 he crossed the ocean twice in a gun-boat, and in 1808 he was made first lieutenant of the *Constitution*.

Mr. Lawrence enjoyed a high reputation in the service, for in addition to his professional attachments, as Decatur had expressed himself of his character, there was "no more dodge about him than about the mainmast." In 1809 he got command of the *Vixen* 14, and shortly after of the *Wasp* 18. Being still a lieutenant, this last command he was compelled to relinquish to Captain Jones, exchanging his ship for the *Argus* 16. In 1811 he was promoted, when he got the *Hornet* 18. In this vessel he was serving at the commencement of the war, and in her he captured the *Peacock* 18. His next command

Perhaps the capture of no single ship ever produced so much exultation on the side of the victors, or so much depression on that of the beaten party, as that of the *Chesapeake*. The American nation had fallen into the error of their enemy, and had begun to imagine themselves invincible on the ocean, and this without any better reason than having been successful in a few detached combats, and its mortification was in proportion to the magnitude of its delusion; while England hailed the success of the *Shannon* as a proof that its ancient renown was about to be regained. It has always been a prevalent illusion among the people of Great Britain to believe themselves superior to most other nations in pure personal prowess, and the *Chesapeake* having been taken by boarding, this peculiar disposition was flattered with the impression that they had prevailed in a hand to hand conflict, and that their seamen had only to go on board the American ships in future, in order to be triumphant. This error, in the end, lost them several vessels, for a more hazardous experiment cannot well be made, than to attempt carrying a ship of any force by boarding, before she has been virtually beaten with the guns. It is scarcely exceeding the truth to say that such a circumstance never occurred. In the ancient navies of Europe, in which men obtained commissions on account of their birth, and captains have been often known to allow their inferiors to give orders in the heat of a combat, any thing may happen, for a ship without a commander is like a man without a soul; but no experienced seaman will ever expose his people unnecessarily in this manner, against an enemy that he feels to be prepared to receive him.

In America reflection soon caused the mortification in a great measure to subside, as it was seen that the capture of the *Chesapeake*, was owing to a concurrence of circumstances that was not likely

was the *Chesapeake* 38, after he was made a captain, in which ship he fell, dying of his wounds June 6th, 1813, in the 32d year of his age.

Captain Lawrence married a lady of New York, in 1809, while in command of the *Vixen*, by whom he had several children, only one of whom, a daughter, survives.

James Lawrence was a man of noble stature, and fine personal appearance. He had the air and manners of a gentleman-like sailor, and was much beloved by his friends. He was quick and impetuous in his feelings, and sometimes manifested it on the quarter-deck, but, in all critical situations, his coolness was remarkable. He was a perfect man-of-war's-man, and an excellent quarter-deck seaman, handling his vessel not only skillfully, but with all the style of the profession. In his feelings and sentiments he was chivalrous, generous, and just. Indeed, his interest in the midshipmen was proverbial, and, on one occasion, when the midshipmen of a squadron gave a dinner to Commodore Rodgers, for some reason it was proposed not to ask any lieutenant. "What, not Mr. Lawrence!" cried one. Mr. Lawrence was excepted by acclamation, and was, in fact, the only lieutenant present. His humanity and kindness of heart were as conspicuous as his courage, and he was never known to say rude things to his inferiors, for while his manner had all a seaman's frankness, and sometimes a superior's impatience, it was tempered by the qualities of a gentleman. His eyes filled with tears while inflicting necessary punishment, nor was it common to find another who had so strong a reluctance to use his authority in this mode, as himself.

There is little doubt that Lawrence fought the *Chesapeake* contrary to his own judgment. His challenge to the *Bonne Citoyenne* was an additional reason for going out, under the circumstances, and it furnishes proof, in itself, of the inexpediency of using those means of bringing on an engagement. His deportment during the battle in which he fell was noble and inspiring, and the loss of the ship may be imputed to his death. Even his enemies eulogised the manner in which he carried his vessel into action, and his dying words, a little changed by a poetical licence, have passed into a nautical rallying cry.

again to happen. It was soon understood that the closeness and short duration of this combat were actually owing to their own officer, who brought his ship so near that the battle was necessarily soon decided, while its succeeding incidents were altogether the results of the chances of war. At the moment when the English boarded, the total loss of the *Shannon* in men, is believed to have been at least equal to that of the *Chesapeake* and yet the former vessel was deprived of the services of no important officer but the boatswain, while the *Chesapeake* had lost those of her captain, two of her lieutenants, master, marine officer, and boatswain, including every one in any authority on the upper deck. These fortuitous events are as unconnected with any particular merit on the one side, as they are with any particular demerit on the other; and the feeling of the Americans gradually settled down into a sentiment of sincere respect for the high-spirited Lawrence, and of deep regret for his loss. When told of their defeat, and called on to acknowledge that their enemy was victorious in one of the most extraordinary combats of the age, they have generally given all the credit to the conquerors that they deserved, and while they frankly admit that the victory was remarkable, they may be excused for believing it quite as much so for standing alone in such a war, as for any other distinguishing characteristic.

CHAPTER XI.

The *Vixen*, Capt. Reed, is captured by the *Southampton*—Both vessels are soon after wrecked—Cruise of the *Siren*, Captain Parker—Death and notice of Capt. P.—The *Siren*, Lieut. Nicholson, is captured by the *Medway*—The *Enterprise*, Lieut. Blakely, captures the privateer *Fly*—Under Lieut. Comdt. Burrows, her action with and capture of the British brig *Boxer*—Commanders of both ships are killed—Notice of Lieut. B.—Under Lieut. Renshaw, the *Enterprise* captures the British privateer *Mars*—Capture of the *Rattlesnake*, Lieut. Comdt. Renshaw, by the *Leander*.

WHILE these different events were occurring among the frigates and larger sloops of war, the lighter cruisers of the navy had not been idle. The fate of the *Nautilus* has been already mentioned; the *Argus's* cruises have also been alluded to; but nothing has been said of the *Siren*, *Enterprise*, and *Vixen*, the other three little vessels, which were so distinguished in the Tripolitan contest. The latter, like her sister the *Nautilus*, had but a short career after the declaration of war. During the first few months, she was on the southern coast, under the command of Captain Gadsden, but that officer dying, she was given to Captain Washington Reed, who went on a cruise among the Islands. A few days out, he was fallen in with and chased by the *Southampton 32*, Captain Sir James Lucas Yeo, which ship succeeded in getting alongside of the *Vixen*, after a short but severe trial of speed, and of course captured her. Both vessels were soon

after wrecked on one of the Bahama Islands, when, it is said, that the American crew set an example of subordination, sobriety, and order, that produced a strong impression on the British officers.*

The *Siren* cruised a short time in the Gulf of Mexico, without meeting with any thing, under Lieutenant Commandant Joseph Bainbridge, and then came north, going into Boston. Here Mr. Bainbridge, who had been promoted, was transferred to the *Frolic*, one of the new sloops built under the late law; and Mr. George Parker, who had been the first lieutenant of the *Constitution*, in her action with the *Java*, having been promoted, was attached to the brig in his place. The future history of this little cruiser being brief, it may be given here. She sailed from Boston in the summer of 1814, and, shortly after she got to sea, Captain Parker† died; when Lieutenant N. Nicholson succeeded to the command. On the 12th of July, the *Siren* fell in with the *Medway* 74, Captain Brine, and, after a vigorous chase of eleven hours, during which the brig threw her guns overboard, she was captured, and taken into the Cape of Good Hope.

The fortune of the *Enterprise* was better, her character for good luck having been singularly maintained, and this, too, under very unfavourable circumstances, throughout the whole of the war. Her first commander was Mr. Johnston Blakely, who kept her on the eastern coast, where she was of great service, in driving off the small privateers that were sent out of the adjacent English ports. In August, she captured the *Fly* privateer, and soon after, Mr. Blakely, having risen to the rank of master and commander, was given the command of a new sloop called the *Wasp*. His successor in the *Enterprise* was Mr. William Burrows. The service of the vessel, under this officer, was not changed, but she was still kept to watch the enemy's privateers, between Cape Ann and the Bay of Fundy.

The *Enterprise* left Portsmouth, N. H., on the 1st of September, 1813, and steering to the eastward, was led into Portland, in chase of a schooner, on the 3d. On the 4th, she swept out to sea again, and pursued her course to the eastward in quest of several privateers that were reported to be off Manhagan. While opening the bay, near Penguin Point, a brig was seen getting under way, that had every appearance of being a vessel of war. The character of the stranger was soon put out of all doubt, by her setting four British ensigns, firing several guns, which are since known to have been

* Shortly after, and before he could be exchanged, Captain Reed, who enjoyed a high reputation for spirit and conduct in the service, died of yellow fever. He had been Somers's first lieutenant.

† The professional history of Captain Parker was a little singular. He was of a respectable family in Virginia, and entered the navy young. He had risen to the rank of lieutenant, or acting lieutenant; when, taking offence at something in the deportment of a tradesman who came on board the ship to which he belonged, which was lying at Washington at the time, he followed the man on shore and chastised him. The man is said to have presented himself to Mr. Jefferson, in the plight in which he had been left, and Mr. Parker was dismissed from the navy, without trial. This occurred in 1804. Determined not to be driven from his profession, Mr. Parker entered as a master's mate, and not long after rose to be a master. In 1807, he received the commission of a lieutenant, and in 1813, that of a master and commander. He was a brave and spirited officer, and badly fair to rise in the service when he died.

signals of recall to a boat that had gone to the shore, and her making sail to close with the *Enterprise*. Being satisfied that he had an enemy and a vessel of war to deal with, Lieutenant Commandant Burrows hauled up, in order to clear the land.

While the two vessels were standing out, the *Enterprise* leading, some preparations were making on board the latter that produced uneasiness in a portion of her crew. This little brig had a small poop-cabin on deck, and Mr. Burrows had directed a long gun from forward to be brought aft, and to be run out of one of the windows. Owing to the rake of the stern-frame, and to the fixtures of the cabin, this arrangement could not be completed without cutting away some of the wood. On observing this, the impression became general among the men that it was the intention of their commander, who was almost a stranger to them, to keep off, and to use the gun as a stern chaser. This was an unpleasant idea to the forecastle men in particular, who were burning with a desire to be carried alongside of the enemy. The forecastle was commanded by a young officer of great promise,* and the seamen at length urged him to go aft and state their anxiety to engage, as well as their entire confidence of success. This gentleman so far complied as to speak privately to the first lieutenant, who explained the intention of Mr. Burrows, and fully satisfied the people.

At 3 P. M., believing himself far enough from the land, and having completed his preparations, Lieutenant Commandant Burrows, a man likely to think of any thing but flight on such an occasion, shortened sail and edged away towards his enemy, who seemed equally willing to engage. The two brigs approached on contrary tacks. As they neared each other, or at 20 minutes past 3, they kept away together; and as they came side by side, both delivered their fire, within pistol-shot. The *Enterprise*, opened with her larboard, and the enemy with his starboard guns. The former brig drew ahead, keeping up an animated fire, and finding himself well forward of the English vessel's bow, Mr. Burrows put his helm a-starboard, and sheered across his antagonist's forefoot, firing the gun that had been run out of the cabin window once or twice with great effect in passing. The enemy was now allowed to come up again on the *Enterprise*'s quarter, when the two vessels engaged with their opposite guns; the American brig continuing to keep well on the enemy's bow. In this situation the English vessel lost her maintopmast, when the *Enterprise* again sheered athwart her forefoot, raked her once or twice more with the long gun aft, which proved to be the most serviceable piece in the vessel, and resumed her position on the enemy's starboard bow, maintaining an animated fire. While lying in this favourable situation, the action terminated.

In this hot and vigorous combat, the *Enterprise* was singularly well handled, manœuvring on the bows of her enemy with effect, while she was kept perfectly in command, and was ready at any moment to meet any change of position on the part of her antagonist.

*Since Commodore Aulick

That it was the original intention of her commander to fight her in this novel manner, was apparent by the forethought he discovered by shifting the bow gun aft.

The fire of the enemy ceased about 4, though his colours were still flying. He now hailed to say he had struck; and when ordered to haul down his ensign, an answer was given that it had been nailed aloft, and could not be lowered until the fire of the *Enterprise* should cease. After this awkward explanation, the *Enterprise* stopped firing, and took possession. The prize proved to be *H. B. M. brig Boxer 14*, Captain Blythe, an officer of merit, who had been cut nearly in two by an eighteen-pound shot. The loss of the *Boxer* in killed has never been accurately ascertained, though it is thought to have been relatively heavy. She had 14 men wounded. The *Enterprise* had 1 man killed, and 13 wounded, of whom 3 subsequently died. Among the latter, unhappily, was her gallant commander. Although the disparity in the casualties of this action was not so striking as in some of the previous engagements, that in the injuries received by the two vessels was very great. But one eighteen-pound shot hulled the *Enterprise*; one passed through her mainmast, and another through her foremast. She was much cut up aloft, particularly by grape; and a great many shot of the latter description had struck her hull. Nearly all the casualties were received from grape or cannister shot. On the other hand, the *Boxer* had been repeatedly hulled, had no less than three eighteen-pound shot through her foremast alone, several of her guns were dismounted, her topgallant forecastle was nearly cut away, and her sails, spars, and rigging generally, were much torn to pieces. The water being quite smooth, neither vessel was dismasted. The *Enterprise* returned to Portland on the 7th, with the *Boxer*, where Lieutenant Commandant Burrows,* and Captain Blythe, were both buried with the honours of war.

This little success was the first that had fallen to the share of the American navy since the loss of the *Chesapeake*; and it had a great influence in restoring the confidence of the nation, which, no longer expecting impossibilities, began to be satisfied with victory. The vessels were of the same class, and, though the *Enterprise* was the longest on deck, there was no material difference in the tonnage. The American vessel carried two guns the most; her armament, as well as that of all the other small vessels, having been increased since the Tripolitan war. When the *Enterprise* first cruised in the West Indies, her armament consisted of 12 sixes. After she was repaired, or rather rebuilt, at Trieste, 14 sixes were put in her; and subse-

* Mr. Burrows was a son of Lieutenant Colonel Burrows, at an earlier day the commandant of the marine corps. He entered the navy, January 4th, 1800, and, though a man of great singularity of temperament, was generally much beloved in the service. He took the *Enterprise* into action in very gallant style, and, after receiving his wound, refused to be carried below, until the *Boxer* had struck. Mr. Burrows was killed by the accidental position of a limb. While encouraging his men, he laid hold of a gun-tackle fall, to help the crew of a carronade that had lost some people, to run out the gun, and in doing so, raised one leg against the bulwark to aid the effort. At this moment, a shot, supposed to be a cannister, struck his thigh, and glanced from the bone into his body, inflicting a fearfully painful wound, which he bore with a fortitude that equalled his courage. He was unmarried, and died in his 28th year.

quently, when altered into a brig, by crowding the ports, she carried 14 eighteen-pound carronades and two long chase guns. She probably had, also, a few more men than the Boxer, though precisely what number cannot be ascertained, as the little brig is said to have had some supernumeraries. Both brigs were gallantly fought, and it is admitted that the Boxer was not given up too soon. When Mr. Burrows fell, the command of the *Enterprise* devolved on Lieutenant E. B. M'Call, who brought both brigs into port.*

After the death of Mr. Burrows, Lieutenant James Renshaw was appointed to the command of the *Enterprise*, under which officer, during the following winter, she made a cruise to the southward, as far as the West Indies. Here her usual good fortune accompanied her; for though she sailed badly, and was three times hard chased, she always escaped. The *Rattlesnake* 16, a fast-sailing brig, bought into the service, was in company, under the orders of Lieutenant Commandant Creighton, who was the senior officer of the two vessels. Mr. Creighton went on cruising ground much frequented by the enemy, and yet fell in with no man-of-war he could engage. He was chased by heavy ships, and, to use his own expression, "in every instance, the good fortune of the *Enterprise* has been wonderfully manifest." The *Rattlesnake* outsailed her consort with so much ease, that most of the cruise she was under her topsails.

While off the coast of Florida, the *Enterprise* got alongside of the *Mars* 14, a British privateer, with a crew of 75 men. When the two brigs appeared, near half the people of the *Mars* took to the boats and went ashore, to escape impressment; but her master, notwithstanding this reduction of his force, ranged up under the broadside of the *Enterprise*, with his tompions out and guns trained. Lieutenant Renshaw being ignorant of the strength of the crew of the *Mars*, fired into her, when she struck, having had 4 men killed and wounded. On the 25th of April, the brigs separated while chased by a frigate. The enemy pursued the *Enterprise*, and for 70 hours pressed her very hard. Lieutenant Commandant Renshaw was compelled to throw all his guns but one overboard, and yet the enemy frequently got within the range of shot. On the morning of the 27th, it was perfectly calm, and the frigate, then at long gun-shot, began to hoist out her boats, when a light breeze sprung up, and brought this lucky little brig again dead to windward. Nothing but this favourable shift of wind saved the *Enterprise* from capture.

Shortly after, Mr. Creighton was promoted, and appointed to the

*There is little doubt that Captain Blythe engaged with strong expectations of capturing the *Enterprise*. He knew of her being near him, and probably knew her when he got under way. It is impossible he should not also have known her force. His people came into action in high spirits; and the colours were nailed to the mast by his orders. When the *Enterprise* hailed to know if the Boxer had struck, one of the officers of the latter sprang on a gun, shook both fists at the Americans, and cried out, "No—no—no," with the addition of some pretty strong terms of opprobrium. So powerful was this gentleman's excitement, that his superior had to order him down, lest he might be the means of drawing a fire on the vessel. It is scarcely necessary to add, that the officers and men of the *Enterprise* laughed at this ludicrous scene, which was rendered so much the more piquant by the process of lowering colours that had been nailed aloft. These expedients may produce good, with particular crews, and in peculiar circumstances; but, as rules, challenges should not be given, nor colours nailed to the mast.

command of a new sloop of war just launched at Washington, and Mr. Renshaw was transferred to the *Rattlesnake*. The two vessels being in a southern port, the *Enterprise* was sent to Charleston, where she became the guard vessel, her sailing being too indifferent to allow of her being sent to sea again, in such a war. When cruising in the *Rattlesnake*, in lat. 40° N., long. 33° W., Lieutenant Commandant Renshaw was chased by a frigate, and compelled to throw overboard all his armament but the two long guns. By this means he escaped. June 22d, near the same spot, however, he fell in with the *Leander* 50, a new ship, constructed on the most approved modern plan, which vessel captured him, the *Rattlesnake* having been unfortunately placed between an enemy that had the advantage of the wind, and the land. On this occasion, Lieutenant Commandant Renshaw kept his colours flying in a very steady and officer-like manner, until the *Leander* threw her shot into the *Rattlesnake* with precision and effect.

CHAPTER XII.

Six new sloops of war added to the navy—Cruise of the *Argus*, Capt. Allen, on the coast of England, and Ireland—she captures twenty sail of merchantmen—Her action with and capture by the *Pelican*—Death of Capt. Allen—sketch of his life—The *Enterprise*—summary of her services.

IN addition to the law of January 2d, 1813, which authorised the construction of four ships of the line and six heavy frigates, it will be remembered that the executive was also empowered to cause several sloops of war to be laid down. These ships were of the class of the *Hornet* and *Wasp*, but were a little larger than the old vessels of the same rate; and they all mounted 20 thirty-two-pound carronades, besides the two bow guns. Most of them were got into the water in the course of the year 1813, though their preparations were in different degrees of forwardness. They were called the *Wasp*, the *Frolic*, the *Peacock*, the *Erie*, the *Ontario*, and the *Argus*. As there had been a brig in the navy of the latter name, however, with which the reader has long been acquainted, it is now necessary to allude to her fate.

After the return of the *Argus* from her cruise under Lieutenant Commandant Sinclair, as has been already stated, Mr. William Henry Allen, who had been the first lieutenant of the *United States* 44, in her action with the *Macedonian*, was appointed to command her. Lieutenant Allen first obtained the *Argus* by an order from Commodore Decatur; and there was a moment when it was uncertain whether Captain Biddle, or this gentleman, should go to sea in the brig, but the former was put into the *Hornet*. Mr. Allen was shortly after promoted, when his new station was confirmed by the

department. June 18th, 1813, the *Argus* sailed from New York, with Mr. Crawford, then recently appointed minister to France, on board; and after a passage of 23 days, she arrived safe at l'Orient. Remaining but three days in the port, Captain Allen proceeded on a cruise.

The *Argus* sailed from l'Orient about the middle of July, and her exploits for the next few weeks, revive the recollections of those of Captains Jones, Wickes, and Conyngham, during the Revolution. Captain Allen kept his brig for some time in the chops of the English Channel, then went round the Land's End, and shifted his cruising ground to the Irish Channel. He captured twenty sail of merchantmen, while passing, as it might be, through the very centre of the enemy, most of which were destroyed. The appearance of this vessel so near the British coast, excited much interest in the English commercial world, and several cruisers were immediately sent in chase of her.

It will readily be understood, that the duty on board the *Argus*, was of the most harassing and fatiguing nature, the feelings of Captain Allen inducing him to allow the masters and passengers of the different vessels he took, to remove every thing of value, that belonged to themselves, before he caused the prizes to be burned. Indeed, in so honourable and chivalrous a spirit did this excellent officer conduct the peculiar warfare in which he was engaged, that even the enemy did ample justice to his liberality.

On the night of the 13th of August, the *Argus* fell in with a vessel from Oporto, loaded with wine. It has been said, and apparently on authority entitled to credit, that a good deal of the liquor was brought on board the brig, clandestinely, as the boats passed to and fro, and that many of the people, who had been over-worked and kept from their rest, partook of the refreshment it afforded too freely. A little before daylight the prize was set on fire, when the *Argus* left her, under easy sail. Shortly after, a large brig of war was seen standing down upon the American vessel, under a cloud of canvass; and finding it impossible to gain the wind of his enemy, Captain Allen shortened sail to allow him to close. At 6, the *Argus* wore, and fired her larboard broadside, the English vessel being then within good grape and cannister range. The fire was immediately returned, the brigs fast drawing nearer. Within four minutes after the commencement of the action, Captain Allen was mortally wounded, by a round shot's carrying off a leg. He refused to be taken below, but fainting from loss of blood, he was carried off the deck at 8 minutes past 6. At 12 minutes past 6, Mr. Watson, the first lieutenant was severely wounded in the head by a grape-shot, which stunned him, and he was also taken below. But one lieutenant remained, Mr. W. H. Allen, who continued to fight the brig, in a very gallant manner, under the most discouraging circumstances. At this juncture, the *Argus* was beautifully handled, an attempt of the enemy to cross her stern, by keeping away, having been frustrated, by the American brig's luffing into the wind, making a half-board and throwing in a completely raking broadside herself. But all the braces aft having

been shot away, the *Argus* broke round off, in filling again, when the enemy succeeded in crossing her stern and raking. At 25 minutes past 6, the wheel-ropes and nearly all the running rigging being gone, the *Argus* become unmanageable, and the enemy chose his position at pleasure. At half past 6, Mr. Watson returned to the deck, when he found the enemy lying under the *Argus*'s stern, pouring in his fire without resistance. An attempt was made to get alongside, with a view to board, but it was found impracticable to move the American brig, while the enemy kept on her quarter, or bow, throwing in a cross or raking fire with impunity, the *Argus* seldom being able to bring a gun to bear. At 47 minutes past 6, the colours were ordered to be hauled down; the enemy, at the same moment, falling on board, and taking possession over the bow.

The English brig was the *Pelican* 18, Captain Maples, mounting 16 thirty-two-pound carronades, four long guns, and one twelve-pound carronade. The armament of the *Argus*, by crowding guns into the bridle ports, was 18 twenty-four-pound carronades and two chase guns. The enemy was so much heavier, that it may be doubted whether the *Argus* could have captured her antagonist under any ordinary circumstances, but it has been usual, in the service, to impute this defeat to a want of officers, and to the fact that the people of the *Argus* were not in a fit condition to go into action. The American vessel was particularly well officered, so far as quality was concerned, though her batteries were necessarily left without a proper supervision, after Mr. Watson was taken below. It is not easy to believe that Captain Allen would have engaged with his people under any very obvious influence from a free use of wine, but nothing is more probable than that the crew of the *Argus* should have been overworked, in the peculiar situation in which they were placed; and they may have been exposed to the peculiar influence mentioned, without the circumstance having come to the knowledge of the superior officers. They have, indeed, been described as "nodding at their guns," from excessive fatigue. One thing would seem to be certain, that, while the brig was beautifully handled, so long as she was at all manageable, the fire of no other American cruiser, in this war, was as little destructive as that of the *Argus*. This has been attributed to the fatigue of the crew, and it is reasonable to suppose that the circumstance of the two lieutenants having been so early taken from the batteries, did not contribute to the accuracy of the fire. It ought, moreover, to be added, that the *Pelican* was about a fourth larger than her antagonist.*

On the other hand, the fire of the enemy, when its length, closeness, and want of resistance, are considered, does not appear to have been remarkable. The *Argus* had two midshipmen, and four men killed,

* Since the publication of the first edition of this book, we have heard the following circumstance from an officer of the *Argus*. The brig having expended a good deal of her powder, Captain Allen took a quantity on board, from a prize bound to South America. Shortly after, the gunner had occasion to fill a number of cylinders, and he used the powder of the prize, which lay uppermost in the magazine. It was afterwards ascertained that this powder was condemned powder of the British government, going to South America to be sold. In proof of its effect, the officer in question, assures us that the *Pelican*'s side was dotted with the impression of shots that did not enter

and 17 men wounded, in an action of three quarters of an hour. The Pelican notwithstanding, was extremely well managed, and was very gallantly fought. She lost 7 men in killed and wounded, but appears to have suffered very little in her hull, or even aloft.

Captain Allen* died of his wounds in the hospital of Mill Prison, and was buried by the enemy with the honours of war. Mr. Watson recovered of his hurts.

Thus the navy lost all but the *Enterprise*, of the five little cruisers that had figured before Tripoli, and which had become endeared to the service by its traditions and recollections. The *Argus* alone, had been taken under circumstances that allowed a gun to be fired. Those who remembered the time when Stewart, Somers, Decatur, Hull, and Smith, bold and ambitious young seamen, commanded these vessels, in a warfare conducted in a distant sea, attached an importance to their loss that was altogether disproportioned to their intrinsic value, and it did not fail to excite remarks, that the *Enterprise* alone, whose good fortune had already been so conspicuous, should continue to cruise, with impunity, in the very centre of the enemy's force, while her four consorts had fallen, one by one.†

* William Henry Allen was born at Providence, Rhode Island, October 21st, 1784. His father had been an officer of the Revolution, and his mother was the sister of one of the governors of the state. He entered the navy April 28th, 1800, or in his sixteenth year, and his first cruise was in the *George Washington*, Captain Bainbridge; his second in the *Philadelphia*, Captain S. Barron; his third in the *John Adams*, Captain Rodgers. He was made an acting lieutenant in the *Constitution*, Commodore Rodgers, in 1805. He was one of the Chesapeake's lieutenants in 1807, and the only gun that was fired at the *Leopard*, was touched off by Mr. Allen, by means of a coal held in his fingers. He remained in the Chesapeake after Captain Decatur took her, and he followed that officer to the *United States 44*, as her first lieutenant. In this latter capacity he was serving when the *Macedonian* was taken. On that occasion, Mr. Allen obtained great credit, as the executive officer of the ship, and the manner in which he repaired the damages of the prize has been esteemed highly seamanlike and beautiful. His promotion, appointment to the *Argus*, and death, appear in the text.

Captain Allen was esteemed one of the best officers of his class in the navy. A thorough man-of-war's man, he was of mild and gentleman-like deportment, a fine, martial personal appearance, and of respectable mental attainments. His influence over the crews with which he sailed was very great, and it is not possible to say, now, what might have been the result of the combat in which he fell, had he not been so early killed. He was unmarried.

The two lieutenants of the *Argus*, though young in service, were both men of great merit. Mr. Watson died while serving on the *West India* station, a few years later, and left an unusual high name, for his gentlemanly and personal qualities; while the junior lieutenant, who bore the same name as Captain Allen, without being a relative, was killed in battle with pirates, a few years later, leaving as high a professional and private character behind him, as any man of his age, who ever died in the service. He was an officer of great ingenuity, respectable attainments, proved courage, and high principles.

† The *luck* of the *Enterprise* will be more apparent, by a short summary of her services. In the French war, under Lieutenant Commandant Shaw, she took more French privateers than any vessel in the West Indies, and her action with *le Flambeau*, was one of the warmest of the sort known. In the succeeding war, she took the *Tripoli*, of equal force. She may be said to have burned the *Philadelphia*, as, with a very trifling exception, this duty was performed by her officers and men. She took the *Boxer* in the English war, and, notwithstanding she sailed very badly after she was rigged into a brig, the enemy never could catch her.

CHAPTER XIII.

Attack on the British ship, *Narcissus*, by the gun-boats in Hampton Roads—Attack on Craney Island—Notice of Mr. Sigourney, killed on board the *Asp*—Blockade of the United States, Macedonian, and *Hornet*—Capture of the American brig *Viper*, Lieut. Henley—Loss of the schooner *Ferret*, Lieut. Kearny—Attack on the *Alligator*, sailing-master Basset—she beats off her assailants—Mr. Basset is promoted—The *Alligator* is sunk in a gale on the coast of Georgia—Loss of all but sixteen of her crew—She is afterwards raised—Exploits of Capt. Kearny—Notice of his services—Gallant defence of gun-boat No. 160, by sailing-master Paine—his promotion—Warfare in the Delaware—Capture of gun-boat No. 121, by the enemy's ships *Junon* and *Martin*.

SHORTLY after the commencement of the war, the enemy had sent Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren to command against the little navy of the republic, with Rear-Admiral Cockburn as the next in rank. Several two-decked ships appeared on the coast, and near a hundred British pennants were assembled in the American seas. A considerable force collected in the Chesapeake, a part of which was kept to watch the *Constellation*, in the manner mentioned, while the small vessels made descents on the coast, or entered the rivers and creeks, with which those waters abound, carrying on a species of warfare that had no other effect on the American nation, than to irritate the public mind, and which, as it regarded the enemy, could not have had a very beneficial influence on their tone, while it must have been repugnant to the feelings of most of those employed on duty so much opposed to the ordinary habits of military men.

In the early part of June, 1813, the enemy was thought to have had more than twenty sail of cruisers in and about the Chesapeake, of which several were ships of the line. The flags of the two admirals were flying among them, and it was in their presence that the first of the three attempts on the *Constellation*, which have been already related, was made. On the 18th, three frigates came into Hampton Roads, and one of them went up nearly to the quarantine ground, sending her boats to destroy some small vessels in the James. The next day the flotilla of gun-boats descended to attack her, under the orders of Captain Tarbell, then temporarily in command of the *Constellation*. There were fifteen boats in all, acting in two divisions, one of which was directed by Lieutenant Gardner, and the other by Lieutenant Robert Henley. Officers and men were taken from the frigate to man them, including nearly all her lieutenants and midshipmen. A company of riflemen volunteered to join the seamen, and were also distributed among the boats. The weather prevented Captain Tarbell from approaching the enemy, until Sunday the 20th, when it fell calm, and the gun-boats dropped down within a good range for their shot, and opened on the upper frigate, about 4, A. M. At this time the two other frigates were still lying in the Roads.

The gun-boats were formed in a crescent, and a brisk cannonade was commenced on the part of the Americans. It was some time before the enemy returned it, the approach in the dark and mist

having taken him completely by surprise. The flotilla began the action at anchor, but it was soon found impossible to keep the boats steady, and most of them weighed, and got out their sweeps, by means of which the guns were kept bearing in the right direction. The defence of the frigate was very feeble, and after discharging two or three broadsides, she got under way, but the wind was too light to enable her either to close, or to haul off. This vessel was in a very critical situation, and owed her escape in a great measure to her consorts; for, after a severe cannonade of more than an hour, one of the ships below was enabled to close, when a much sharper contest occurred. But the wind increasing, and the third ship drawing near, Captain Tarbell made a signal for the flotilla to retire.

In this affair, most of the boats were conducted with spirit. Their fire was well directed, and they treated the upper ship quite roughly. The fire of this vessel was extremely feeble, and it appears to have done no execution whatever. That of the second ship, however, was very animated, and it was particularly well directed. Although the loss of the Americans in men was small, consisting of only one master's mate killed, and two men wounded, the enemy's grape flew around them in great numbers. One boat received a bad shot between wind and water, and several had their sweeps shot away, or were otherwise injured. The gun-boat commanded by Mr. Nantz, sailing-master, was crippled, and in danger of being captured by the enemy, when, by order of Captain Tarbell, she was taken in tow by the boat commanded by Lieutenant W. B. Shubrick, of the *Constellation*, and brought off.

The frigate first engaged was thought to be the *Narcissus* 32, and the vessel that came to her relief, the *Junon* 38, Captain Saunders. This experiment had the effect to convince most of the sea-officers engaged on board the gun-boats, however, of the bad qualities of that description of vessel, they having been very generally found wanting in a sufficient degree of steadiness to render their fire certain, even in smooth water. The recoils of the guns caused them to roll to a degree that rendered the aim uncertain, and it has been seen that they could only be kept in the proper positions by the aid of sweeps.

The next flood, a large force of the enemy, consisting of fourteen sail, came into the Roads, and an attack was expected. On the 20th, the enemy's ships weighed, and ascended with the tide to the mouth of James river, where, in the afternoon, they were seen making preparations to send up a large force in boats. As so much depended on the defence of the batteries of Craney Island, Captain Cassin, who commanded the naval force at Norfolk, sent three of the lieutenants of the *Constellation*, Messrs. Neale, W. Branford Shubrick, and Sanders, on shore, with 100 seamen, to take charge of the principal guns. This party was sustained by Lieutenant Breckenridge, of the marines, and about 50 men of that gallant corps. Most of the officers of the navy then at Norfolk, and who did not belong to the frigate, were also employed in the gun-boats, or about the island.

Early on the morning of the 22d, the enemy was discovered landing a large force round the point of the Nansemond; and about 8 A.

M. the barges of the vessels of war attempted to land in front of Craney Island, at a point where they were safe from the fire of the gun-boats, though exposed to that of the seamen's battery. Mr. Neale now opened his fire, which was directed with great coolness and precision, and, after having three of his boats sunk, the enemy abandoned the attempt. The narrative of the remainder of the operations of this day, belongs to the general history of the war, rather than to a work of this character.

The officers, seamen, and marines of the *Constellation*, as well as the other portions of the navy employed on this occasion, gained great credit for their steadiness, discipline, and spirit. One of the barges sunk was said to have been a peculiar boat, called, from the great number of oars she rowed, the *Centipede*. She was described as having been fifty feet long, and as having contained 75 men. About 40 prisoners were made from the boats that were sunk, though the total loss of the enemy who were opposed to the seamen and marines, is not known. Captain Cassin, in describing the fire of the seamen's battery, observed that it resembled the shooting of riflemen. There is no doubt that the enemy found it much too cool and direct to be faced.

The government had fitted out several small vessels for the defence of the bays and rivers, and among others were the *Scorpion* and *Asp*. On the 14th, these two little cruisers, got under way from the *Yeocomico*, and stood out into the river, when, at 10 A. M., a considerable force of the enemy was seen in chase. The *Scorpion*, on board of which was the senior officer, immediately made a signal for the *Asp* to act at discretion, and began to beat up the river. The *Asp* being a dull sailer, her commander, Mr. Sigourney, thought it expedient to re-enter the creek. He was followed by two brigs, which anchored off the bar, and hoisted out their boats. Mr. Sigourney now deemed it more prudent to run higher up the *Yeocomico*; and as the enemy was already pulling in, he cut his cable and made sail. Three boats soon after attacked the *Asp*, which made a very gallant defence, and handsomely beat them off. The enemy, however, reinforced, and renewed the attack with five boats, when Mr. Sigourney ran the *Asp* on shore, and was boarded by about 50 men, who succeeded in carrying her. She was set on fire and abandoned, but Mr. McClintock, the officer second in command, got on board her again, and succeeded in extinguishing the flames. In this affair, Mr. Sigourney was killed, dying sword in hand in defence of his vessel, in a manner to reflect the highest credit on his professional training and personal gallantry.* The *Asp* had but two or three light guns, and a crew of 21 souls. Of the latter, 10 were killed, wounded, and missing; facts that attest the gallantry of the defence.

While these events were occurring at the south, some movements farther north brought a part of the enemy's force within the waters

* Mr. Sigourney was from Boston, and had served as a midshipman under Lawrence, in whose school he had obtained his notions of duty. Few persons discovered more aptitude for the profession than this young gentleman, who, at the time of his death, had been but five years in the service. His age must have been about 21.

of Long Island Sound, where, with occasional changes of ships, it continued to the close of the war. After the United States had refitted at New York, on her return from the cruise in which she had captured the *Macedonian*, Commodore Decatur prepared to sail again, with the latter frigate in company. The *Hornet* being about to go to sea, at the same time, in order to join the *Chesapeake*, Captain Lawrence, the three vessels got under way, and passed Hell Gate on the 27th of May, with a view to run off the coast between Montauk and Block Island. It was June the 1st before the ships found an opportunity to pass through the Race; but they were met near the end of the island by a greatly superior force, and were chased into New London. Here all three of the vessels were closely blockaded, nor was either of the frigates able to get to sea during the remainder of the war, though opportunities were long and anxiously sought. In the end, their officers and people were transferred to other vessels. It will give an idea of the great importance that ought to be attached to the means of raising blockades, when it is remembered that, while watching the three American vessels which then lay in the Thames above New London, the enemy also had it in his power to blockade the most important point on the continent connected with the coasting trade.

About this time, also, a small brig called the *Viper*, which had been put into the service under the orders of Lieutenant John D. Henley, was taken by the *Narcissus* 32, under circumstances that require no particular description. Mr. Henley, as well as Mr. Crane, of the *Nautilus*, Mr. Nicholson, of the *Siren*, Mr. Watson, of the *Argus*, Mr. Renshaw, of the *Rattlesnake*, Captain Reed, of the *Vixen*, and all the officers and men under their orders, were found, by regular courts of inquiry, to have done their duty on the several occasions in which they had lost the different vessels named.

The U. S. schooner *Ferret*, Lieutenant Kearny, another of the little vessels employed on the southern coast, in order to protect the bays, rivers, sounds, and inlets, was lost in February, 1814, on the breakers of Stony Inlet, but her people were all saved.

In January of the same year, the *Alligator*, another small schooner, commanded by Mr. Basset, a sailing-master, was lying at anchor off the coast, abreast of Cole's Island, and observing an enemy's frigate and brig, just without the breakers, Mr. Basset suspected that an attempt would be made on him in the course of the night. Preparations to receive the enemy were made accordingly. About half-past 7 in the evening, six boats were discovered, under cover of the marsh grass, pulling up with muffled oars. When near enough, they were hailed, and a musket was fired at them. The boats now made a general discharge of musketry and grape, which the *Alligator* immediately returned. The schooner then cut her cable, and availing herself of a light breeze, she was immediately brought under command of her helm. By this promptitude, Mr. Basset succeeded in beating off his assailants, notwithstanding the schooner soon after grounded. The *Alligator* had 2 men killed, and 2 wounded, while the loss of the enemy was never known. The schooner had but 40

men on board, while the boats are thought to have contained about 100. Of the latter, the loss must have been severe, or they would not have abandoned the attack after the Alligator had grounded. The firing continued half an hour, and the schooner was a good deal cut up in her sails and rigging. A large cutter, that was supposed to have been one of the boats of the enemy on this occasion, was shortly after picked up on the North Edisto, much injured by shot. The bodies of one officer and of a common seaman were also found near by. The former had lost an arm, besides receiving a musket-shot wound. Mr. Basset was promoted for his gallantry.

We will connect the incidents that relate to the Alligator, by recording here a singular accident that not long after befel her. After refitting, she returned to her cruising ground, under Mr. Basset; and July 1st, 1814, while lying in Port Royal Sound, off the island of St. Simons, on the coast of Georgia, a black cloud was seen rapidly approaching from the direction of the continent. As this gust had every appearance of a tornado, Mr. Basset, certain it would capsize his schooner, unless avoided by getting before the wind, cut his cable, got the head of his jib up, and endeavoured to run the Alligator ashore. The vessel was no sooner dead before the wind, than she was struck by a tremendous gust which she withstood; when, believing the danger over, Mr. Basset ordered the helm down, and the small bower let go. This brought the vessel up. In about ten minutes, however, she was struck by another gust, and the second cable was cut. Unhappily, it was useless, for this new effort of the wind whirled the Alligator round and round, as if she had been a shell, and upset her. The schooner filled and sunk in four fathoms water, with her head to the eastward. Unfortunately, a cutter that was lying on one side of the deck, was thrown over to the other, killing or desperately wounding many persons, and catching Messrs. Brailesford and Rogerson, midshipmen, beneath it. These two gentlemen, and 17 men, were known to have been drowned; 4 were missing, who most probably shared the same fate, and 16 persons were saved. The Alligator was subsequently raised.

The in-shore war at the south was distinguished by many other little exploits, resembling those already related; one of which, that was performed under the eyes of Captain Dent, who commanded at Charleston, is deserving of particular notice. Although it will be advancing the time to a period near the close of the war, it may be related here, with a view to present to the reader most of these isolated instances of gallantry in one picture.

In January, 1815, while Captain Dent was at the North Edisto, he obtained information that a party of officers and men belonging to the Hebrus, Captain Palmer, was watering on one of the islands of the vicinity, and he directed Mr. Lawrence Kearny to proceed outside, with three barges, to cut them off, while a party of militia endeavoured to assail them by land. The frigate was at anchor, out of gun-shot; but as soon as she perceived the design of the Americans, she fired guns, and made other signals of recall, when two of the boats pulled towards her, and a tender, that contained a

strong party, attempted to run out also. Fortunately the wind shifted, bringing the Hebrus to windward of the American barges, it is true, but the tender to leeward of them. Discovering his advantage, Mr. Kearny determined to make a dash at the latter, regardless of the frigate and of the two boats that were pulling off. The Hebrus, perceiving the danger in which her tender was placed, now made the greatest exertions to save her. Shot were fired at her own cutters, to drive them back to the assistance of the tender; and a third boat was sent from the frigate with the same object. She also opened her fire on the American barges with much effect, one of her shot taking off the head of a man at Mr. Kearny's side. But this gallant officer, disregarding every thing but his object, laid the tender aboard in the steadiest manner, and carried her off, directly under the guns of the frigate to which she belonged. The Hebrus's launch was also taken, her people having hurried on board the tender when the alarm was given. The latter had a carronade and six brass swivels in her, besides other arms.

Mr. Kearny made about 40 prisoners on this occasion. The Hebrus intercepting his return, by the way he had come out, he carried his prize to the South Edisto.

A few days later, Mr. Kearny, in the launch of the Hebrus, with a crew of 25 men, went out and captured a tender belonging to the Severn, having on board between 30 and 40 men. Handsomer exploits of the sort were not performed in the war.*

To this list of the minor conflicts, may be added an attack on gun-boat No. 160, commanded by Mr. Paine. This officer, who then held the rank of sailing-master, was convoying a number of coasters from Savannah to St. Mary's, when an expedition, consisting of a tender full of men, and ten boats, attacked him in St. Andrew's Sound, about 3 A. M. of the 6th of October, 1814. After a short cannonading and a sharp discharge of musketry, that lasted about 20 minutes, the enemy closed, and carried the boat by boarding. There were but 16 men fit for duty in No. 160 at the time; her entire complement consisting of 30 souls. Mr. Paine was badly wounded, as were two of his people. The enemy suffered severely, the defence having been spirited and obstinate.†

A short notice of the warfare in the Delaware properly occurs next. This bay had no longer the importance it possessed in the war of 1775. Then, Philadelphia was both the commercial and political capital of the country, but it had now lost the latter distinction, and in the way of shipping, several ports were fast outstripping it.

* The services and professional character of Com. Kearny, who is still living, are much better known to the navy than to the country. This gentleman was put in situations of command and responsibility soon after he entered the service in 1807; and while a lieutenant, he probably had commanded vessels longer than any captain then on the list. He commanded the *Enterprise* many years, as a lieutenant; and before he was made a master and commander, had passed about ten years in separate commands. In the Mediterranean, at a much later day it was said of this officer, that his ship, the *Warren* 20, had done more to suppress piracy than all the other vessels, French, English, American, and Russian, united. Com. Kearny's mother was a sister of the regretted Lawrence, whose family name he bears.

† Mr. Paine was promoted for his good conduct, and is now a commander.

The enemy, consequently, paid much less attention to these waters than to those of the Chesapeake, and to other points of more interest. The length of the river, too, added to the security of the places that lie on its banks, and there was little apprehension of any serious descent. Still, a flotilla consisting of gun-boats and block-sloops had been equipped, and it was put under the orders of Lieutenant Angus, an officer of tried spirit.

On the 29th of July, 1813, Mr. Angus learned that an enemy's sloop of war had come round the cape, and he dropped down to reconnoitre, with eight gun-boats and two block-sloops. The sloop of war had grounded on the outside of Crow's shoals, and it was determined to attack her. Before the flotilla could get in order, however, a frigate came in, and anchored within supporting distance of the sloop. At length all the boats but one, No. 121, Mr. Shead, were in their stations, and the cannonading commenced. No. 121 had unfortunately drifted a mile and a half from her consorts, and, though she kept sweeping, no exertions could get her back into the line. After a sharp cannonade of more than an hour, the British vessels sent eight boats, with a strong party of men, against the straggler. Finding all his efforts to regain the line ineffectual, Mr. Shead anchored, and prepared to receive the enemy, with a coolness that was very creditable. As soon as his boat was steady, Mr. Shead fired at the enemy. At the first discharge the pintle of the gun gave way. Notwithstanding this accident, a second shot was fired, and with effect, but the gun-carriage was nearly torn to pieces. Mr. Shead loaded again, in the hope of obtaining an accidental range, but without success. In the mean time, the enemy steadily advanced, keeping up a warm fire from his boat-guns and small arms, and the people of No. 121 prepared to repel boarders. The overwhelming force of the assailants, however, rendered resistance useless, and the English soon covered the decks of the gun-boat, her people being driven below.

The enemy's ships were the *Junon* 38, and *Martin* 16; and their loss was 7 killed and 12 wounded. No. 121 had 7 men wounded.

During the summer of 1813, after the capture of the *Chesapeake*, the American government had but three frigates at sea; the *President* 44, the *Congress* 38, and *Essex* 32. The *Constitution* 44, was undergoing repairs; the *Constellation* 38, was blockaded at Norfolk, and the *United States* 44, and the *Macedonian* 38, were closely watched in the Thames, at New London. The *Adams* 28, was undergoing repairs and alterations; the *John Adams* 28, after having been once cut down, and once raised upon, had been laid up, as unfit to cruise in such a war. She was subsequently cut down a second time, but was not yet in a condition to go to sea; and the *New York* 36, and *Boston* 28, were virtually condemned. The war had continued but little more than a year, when all the brigs were captured, with the exception of the *Enterprise*, which, as has been already stated, was no longer trusted at sea.

The loss of the small vessels induced professional men to reflect on the causes, and it appears to have been the better opinion, that

too many guns were crowded upon them, and that they were overmanned. The great number of people on board, in particular, helped to impede their sailing, by compelling the vessel to take in a larger stock of provisions and supplies than they were originally intended to carry, bringing them too low in the water; the lightness of their frames, and their sharpness, rendering it impossible to dispense with a corresponding weight of iron ballast. Had these vessels remained schooners, with crews of 70 or 80 men, and their original armaments, their chances for running would probably have been much increased. It should be remembered, however, that a small cruiser is always much more liable to being captured than a large one, as a frigate is of sufficient force to defeat the attempts of more than half the vessels of war that are usually fallen in with at sea.

The administration manifested prudence and foresight, in the class of vessels that were now constructed to supersede the smaller cruisers, sloops of war, of a size and force that were sufficient to resist any thing beneath the smaller frigates, having been laid down. These vessels were large enough to carry sail hard, while their crews bore no proportion to those of the little craft mentioned. Of nearly three times their tonnage, they did not carry twice the number of people of the latter, and, of course, were enabled to dispense with a proportionate amount of stores. In the end, their good qualities were made manifest; and had hostilities continued for any length of time, it is probable that the large class sloop of war would have been found to be the most serviceable vessel the country could have employed, in the absence of a force sufficient to keep the coast entirely clear of the enemy.

CHAPTER XIV.

Launch of the *Guerriere*, *Independence*, and *Java*—Capture of the *Frolic*, Capt. Bainbridge, by the frigate *Orpheus*—The *Adams* cut down and lengthened—her cruise under Capt. Morris—she captures the *Woodbridge*—is burnt at *Penobscot*—Cruise of the *Wasp*, Capt. Blakely—she captures the *Reindeer*—cuts out a vessel with military stores—her action with and destruction of the *Avon*—she captures the brigs *Three Brothers*, *Bacchus*, and *Attalanta*—her uncertain fate—Notice of Capt. Blakely—The *Peacock*, Capt. Warrington, captures the *Epervier*—she cruises in the enemy's seas, and captures fourteen merchantmen—Capture of the *Highflyer* by the *President*, Com. Rodgers.

THE *Guerriere* 44, the first frigate that had been put into the water, on the sea-board, by the American government, since the year 1801, was launched at Philadelphia, June the 20th, 1814. It was intended that the *Independence* 74, should have gone off the same day, at Boston, but she stuck on the ways. She was got safely into the water on the 20th of July, however, and was the first two-decked ship that ever properly belonged to the American navy; the *America* 74, having been given to the King of France while yet on the

stocks. The Java 44 soon followed, at Baltimore. Commodore Rodgers was appointed to the *Guerriere*, Commodore Bainbridge to the *Independence*, and Captain Perry to the Java. These were the only large vessels that were launched on the Atlantic during the war, though the keels of the Franklin 74, Washington 74, and Columbia 44, were laid, and the two first ships were eventually got afloat; the Franklin in 1815, and the Washington in the succeeding year.

The new sloops of war began to go to sea in the course of this summer. The *Frolic* 18, Captain Bainbridge, had a short career, having been chased and captured, on the 20th of April, 1814, by the *Orpheus* 36, Captain Pigot, soon after she got out. There was no action, the *Frolic* having thrown most of her guns overboard in the chase.

The *Adams* 28 had been cut down to a sloop of war and lengthened, at Washington, so as to mount 28 guns on one deck, under the law of 1812. She succeeded in passing the enemy's ships in Lynnhaven Bay, on the night of the 18th of January, 1814, under the command of Captain Morris, an officer whose career has been incidentally traced from the rank of midshipman up to that which he now held. The *Adams* ran off east, to get into the track of the English East Indiamen, and she made several prizes of no great value. On the 25th of March, however, she captured the *Woodbridge*, Indiaman, and while taking possession, the weather cleared up, Captain Morris found himself directly to leeward of twenty-five sail, with two vessels of war, one of which was a heavy ship, running down for him. The prize was necessarily abandoned, and the *Adams* was chased until the following day, when the enemy resumed his course. The *Adams* continued her cruise, going into Savannah, in April, for supplies. On the 5th of May, she sailed again, going off the Mantilla Reef, in waiting for the Jamaica convoy, which, unfortunately, passed her in the night. The *Adams*, on ascertaining this fact, gave chase, and got in sight of the fleet, but was driven off by two vessels of war. By no artifice could Captain Morris cut a vessel out, however, the ships sailing in the closest possible order, and the cruisers in company manifesting great vigilance.

The *Adams* now stood to the northward and eastward, falling in with much ice, and thick weather, in the latitude of New York. On the 3d of July she made the Irish coast, and on the 4th she chased two vessels into the mouth of the Shannon. The thick weather was much against the ship, and she ran more to the southward. In lat. 49°, long. 10°, an enemy's frigate was made on the lee bow, and a hard chase ensued. By sunset the frigate was nearly within gunshot, and the wind being light, the *Adams* cut away her anchors, and threw overboard two guns. In the course of the night it fell calm, and Captain Morris who had participated so largely in the escape of the *Constitution*, got out his boats to tow. As the first lieutenant of the *Adams* (Mr. Wadsworth) had been the second lieutenant of Captain Hull, on that celebrated occasion, these officers employed their time so well, during the night, that when the day dawned, the enemy was near two leagues astern. This industry probably saved

the ship, for the frigate proved to be very fast, nor did she give up the chase until 10 the succeeding night, when the Adams altered her course and escaped.

Shortly after, the Adams was chased by two more frigates, one of which was on her lee bow, and the other on her beam. The last of these vessels continued just out of gun-shot, near twenty-four hours, when she was avoided, also, by changing the course in the night. The ship had now been near two months in a cold, foggy, damp atmosphere, and the scurvy made its appearance on board. So many men were seized with this terrible disease, that Captain Morris deemed it prudent to go into port. At 4 A. M. on the 17th of August, in very thick weather, the Adams ran ashore on the Isle of Haute, but was got off by lightening. It was found, however, that she made nine feet of water in an hour, and Captain Morris succeeded in getting her into the Penobscot, in Maine, as high up as Hampden, which is several miles above Castine.

While the Adams lay ready to be hove out, with nothing in her, a strong expedition of the enemy, consisting of troops and vessels of war, entered the river, and ascended as high as Hampden. A small force of militia was assembled, and a battery was mounted with the guns of the ship, in order to protect her; but the irregular troops giving way, and leaving the seamen and marines exposed in the rear, the first without muskets, nothing remained but to set the vessel on fire, and to make a retreat. All the service connected with the ship was performed in the most orderly and creditable manner, until a part of the country was reached where it was found impossible to subsist the men in a body, on account of the distance between the inhabitants, when the people were directed to break up into small parties, and to make the best of their way to Portland. It is a fact worthy of being recorded, that every man rejoined his commander, according to orders, though a fatiguing march of two hundred miles was necessary to do so. Captain Morris showed great resources, in these trying circumstances; and Messrs. Wadsworth, Madison, Parker, and Beatty, the lieutenants of the ship, Mr. Watson, of the marine corps, and Mr. Rogers, the purser, were exceedingly active and useful. Indeed, all the officers and men of the Adams appear to have behaved more than commonly well. But one seaman and one marine fell into the enemy's hands.

The ship had made many prizes during this cruise, most of which were destroyed.

While the Adams was thus running the chances of chases and shipwreck, the *Wasp* 18, Captain Blakely, sailed from Portsmouth, N. H., on a cruise. This was one of the new sloops of war already mentioned, and the name of the favourite vessel, captured by the Poictiers, had been given to her. A letter from Captain Blakely announced that he was in the offing, on the first of May, 1814, with a fine breeze at N. W. He ran off the coast without molestation, and soon appeared near the chops of the English Channel, where he began to repeat the ravages caused by the *Argus*. The position of the ship now exacted the utmost vigilance, as she was in the very

track of the enemy. At a quarter past 4 A. M. on the 28th of June, 1814, the *Wasp*, then cruising in lat. $48^{\circ} 36'$ N., long. $11^{\circ} 15'$ W., made two sail, a little forward of the lee beam. The weather was fine, the wind light, and the water exceedingly smooth for that sea. After keeping away in chase, another stranger was discovered on the weather beam, when the ship was immediately brought by the wind, in order to close with her, it being obviously expedient for the American vessel to select the antagonist that had the most weatherly position. At 10 the chase showed English colours, and began to make signals. At noon her signals were repeated, and she fired a gun. The *Wasp* did not go to quarters until 15 minutes past 1; and soon after, believing he could weather the chase, Captain Blakely tacked. The stranger also tacked, however, and stood off, no doubt to preserve the weather gage. The *Wasp* now showed her ensign, and fired a gun to windward. The enemy, a large man-of-war brig, gallantly answered this defiance. The *Wasp* immediately set her light canvass to close, when, at 32 minutes past 2, the enemy tacked, and began to draw near. The American now took in her light sails, and tacked in her turn; the English vessel still maintaining her weatherly position, and making sail to close.

At 17 minutes past 3, the enemy was on the weather quarter of the *Wasp*, distant about sixty yards, when he fired his shifting-gun, a twelve-pound carronade mounted on a topgallant forecastle. Two minutes later he fired again; and the discharges were repeated until the gun had been deliberately fired five times into the *Wasp*, at that short distance, and in unusually smooth water. All this time the *Wasp* could not bring a gun to bear; and finding that the enemy drew ahead very slowly, Captain Blakely put his helm down, and made a half-board, firing from aft forward, as the guns bore. He now hauled up the mainsail, and the two ships being necessarily very near, every shot told. But the fire of the *Wasp* was too heavy to be borne, and the brig ran her aboard, on her starboard quarter, at 40 minutes past 3, her larboard bow coming foul. The English now made several trials to enter the *Wasp*, led by their commander in person, but were repulsed with steadiness and without confusion. Two or three desperate efforts were repeated, but with the same want of success, when, at 44 minutes past 3, Captain Blakely gave the order in turn, to go on board the Englishman, and in one minute his flag was lowered. On the part of the enemy, this action lasted 28 minutes; on the part of the *Wasp*, 19 minutes, including the time employed in boarding.

The prize was his Britannic Majesty's sloop of war *Reindeer* 18, Captain Manners. The *Reindeer* was an ordinary thirty-two-pounder brig, but, like the *Peacock*, her armament, when taken, was of twenty-four-pound carronades. She mounted 18 guns, besides the shifting carronade, and had a complement on board of 118 souls. Her loss was 25 killed, and 42 wounded; 10 of the latter dangerously. Among the slain was Captain Manners; and the first lieutenant and master were wounded. The *Wasp* had 5 men killed, and 22 wounded. Two midshipmen, both of whom subsequently died, were among the

latter. The *Reindeer* was literally cut to pieces, in a line with her ports ; her upper works, boats and spare spars being one entire wreck. A breeze springing up next day, her foremast fell. The *Wasp* was hulled six times, and she was filled with grape. The principal loss she sustained in men, however, was in repelling the attempt to board.

It is difficult to say which vessel behaved the best in this short but gallant combat. The officers and people of the *Wasp* discovered the utmost steadiness, a cool activity, and an admirable discipline. For eleven minutes they bore the fire of a twelve-pounder, that was discharging round and grape, at a distance varying from 60 to 30 yards, with a subordination and quiet that could not possibly be surpassed ; and when it did commence, their own fire was terrible. The attempts to carry their ship were repulsed with ease and coolness, and when the order to go on board the enemy was received, it was obeyed with decision and promptitude. Throughout the whole affair, the ship was conspicuous for the qualities that most denote a perfect man-of-war, and the results of her efforts were in proportion. It is believed, notwithstanding, that this ship had an unusual number of men on board of her, who were now at sea for the first time.

On the other hand, the attack of the *Reindeer* has usually been considered the most creditable to the enemy of any that occurred in this war. It is scarcely possible that the English could have mistaken a ship with the air and style of the *Wasp* for a privateer ; and Captain Manners, in engaging her, like Captain Allen, of the *Argus*, must have been conscious that he was going into action with a vessel heavier than his own. The mode in which he approached was exceedingly officer-like ; and when he discovered the hopelessness of contending against the fire to which he found himself so suddenly and unexpectedly exposed, the decision and gallantry with which he attempted to retrieve the day by boarding, was of the highest order of military and personal merit. It is understood the enemy had endeavoured to persuade himself that the Chesapeake had been captured by his superior prowess in hand to hand conflicts ; a delusion so general in Great Britain, as has been already stated, that it has frequently led their officers into serious disasters in America ; and it is possible that the commander of the *Reindeer* may have believed his crew, which is said to have been better than common, able to carry the *Wasp* in this manner. The result showed the difference between a crew that was well commanded, and one that had no leaders, but in no degree detracts from the merit of the English officer, whose personal deportment in this affair, is described as having been worthy of all praise.*

Captain Blakely put a portion of his wounded prisoners on board a neutral, and proceeded himself to l'Orient, where he arrived on the 8th of July, with the remainder. The prize was burned, on account of the great danger of recapture.

* Captain Manners received three wounds before the attempt to board, one shot having nearly carried away the calves of both legs. In endeavouring to board, he sprang into the rigging of his own vessel, when he was struck on the upper part of the head by two musket-balls, which passed through to the chin. Flourishing his sword, he fell dead on his own deck.

After a detention in port until the 27th of August, the *Wasp* sailed on another cruise. Two prizes were made when a few days out; and on the 1st of September she cut a vessel loaded with guns and military stores, out of a convoy of ten sail, that was under the care of the *Armada 74*; but was chased off by the enemy, in an attempt to seize another. On the evening of the same day, while running free, four sail were seen, nearly at the same time, of which two were on the larboard, and two on the starboard bow. The latter being farthest to windward, the *Wasp* hauled up for the most weatherly of them. At 7 P. M. the chase began to make signals, with flags, lanterns, rockets, and guns. The *Wasp* disregarded all, but kept steadily approaching. At 20 minutes past 9, she had the enemy on her lee bow, within hail, and a gun was fired into him. The shot was returned, when Captain Blakely put his helm up, and passed to leeward, under an apprehension that the enemy might attempt to escape, for it was blowing fresh, and the ship was running ten knots at the moment. This was easily effected, the enemy being still in doubt as to the character of the *Wasp*, both vessels hailing. As soon as she had got the desired position, however, the American ship poured in a broadside, and a warm engagement commenced at 29 minutes past 9. The firing was close and severe, though the combat had the usual embarrassments of a night action. By 10 o'clock, notwithstanding the darkness and the swell that was on at the time, the fire of the enemy had ceased, and Captain Blakely hailed to ascertain if he had surrendered. Receiving no answer, and a few guns being fired on board the English vessel, the *Wasp* poured in a fresh broadside, but at 12 minutes past 10, perceiving that the enemy did not fire any longer, he was again hailed, with a demand to know if he had surrendered. The answer was in the affirmative, and the *Wasp* lowered a boat to take possession. Before the latter struck the water, however, the smoke having blown away, another vessel was seen astern, coming up fast, when the boat was run up again, the people were sent to their guns, which had been secured, and the *Wasp* was brought under command, in readiness to receive this second antagonist. At 36 minutes past 10, two more sail were seen astern, and it became necessary to abandon the prize.

The helm of the *Wasp* was now put up, and the ship ran off dead before the wind, in order to reeve new braces, and in the hope of drawing the nearest vessel farther from her consorts. This vessel continued the chase, until she got quite near the *Wasp*, when she hauled her wind across the stern of the latter, delivered a broadside, and made stretches to rejoin the captured vessel, which, by this time, was firing guns of distress. It would have been easy for the second vessel to run alongside of the *Wasp*, but the urgent situation of her consort, probably, prevented the step.

As the *Wasp* left her prize so suddenly, she had no means of learning her name or loss. She had herself but two men killed, and one wounded, the latter by a wad; a circumstance that proves the closeness of the combat. She was hulled four times, had a good many grape in her, and was much cut up aloft. All that Captain

Blakely could state concerning his enemy, was his impression that she was one of the largest brigs in the British navy. The four shot that hulled the *Wasp*, weighed each just 32 pounds. She had many hands in her tops, and otherwise appeared to be strongly manned.*

It is now known that the vessel captured by the *Wasp*, was the *Avon* 18, Captain Arbutnot. The brig that followed the *Wasp*, and fired into her, was the *Castilian* 18, and one of the other vessels in sight was also a cruiser. The *Avon* was so much injured that she sunk, and it was with great difficulty that the other vessel saved her people. By some accounts, indeed, a few of the wounded were lost. The loss of men on board the *Avon* is not accurately known, the statements varying from 30 to 50. The vessel was cut up in an extraordinary manner. She is believed to have mounted 18 thirty-two-pound carronades, with the usual chase guns, and to have had a crew of 120 men in her.

Captain Blakely's conduct on this occasion, had all the merit shown in the previous action, with the additional claim of engaging an enemy under circumstances which led him to believe that her consorts were in his immediate vicinity. The steady officer-like manner in which the *Avon* was destroyed, and the coolness with which he prepared to engage the *Castilian*, within ten minutes after his first antagonist had struck, are the best eulogiums on this officer's character and spirit, as well as on the school in which he had been trained.

The action between the *Wasp* and the *Avon* occurred on the 1st of September, 1814, (sea-time,) in lat. $47^{\circ} 30'$, N., long. $11^{\circ} W$. September the 12th, in lat. $38^{\circ} 2'$, N., and long. $14^{\circ} 58'$, W., the former ship took the brig *Three Brothers*, and scuttled her. September 14th, in lat. $37^{\circ} 22'$, N., long. $14^{\circ} 33'$, W., she took the brig *Bacchus*, and scuttled her. September the 21st, in lat. $33^{\circ} 12'$, N., long. $14^{\circ} 56'$, W., she took the brig *Atalanta* 8, with 19 men. As this was a valuable prize, Mr. Geisinger, one of the midshipmen of the *Wasp*, was put on board her, and she was sent to America. The *Atalanta* arrived safely at Savannah, Nov. 4th, and brought the last direct intelligence that was ever received from the regretted Blakely and the *Wasp*. Various accounts have been given of the manner in which she was probably lost, but nothing that can be deemed authentic has ever been ascertained. It will be seen that the ship had got as far south as the Azores, when Mr. Geisinger left her, and she was, in fact, cruising between those islands and the Straits of Gibraltar when Captain Blakely wrote his last letter. There is a rumour that an English frigate went into Cadiz, much crippled, and with a very severe loss in men, about this time, and that she reported her injuries to have been received in an engagement with a heavy American corvette, the latter disappearing so suddenly, in the night, that it was

*Captain Blakely adds that the enemy's shot weighed one pound and three-quarters more than any on board the *Wasp*. This would make the 32 pound shot of the *Wasp* weigh about 30 pounds, and was probably near the proportion that all the American shot of that day bore to their nominal weight. It follows, that in this action the metal of the enemy was about two pounds heavier to the gun than that of the *Wasp*, while in the action with the *Reindeer*, the *Wasp's* metal was only about six pounds heavier to the gun, than that of her enemy. In both these cases, the long guns are excepted; the American ship probably carrying heavier metal forward than the English.

thought she had sunk. This story can be traced to no authentic source. By another account, the ship had been wrecked on the African coast, and for a short time, it was believed that her people were prisoners among the Arabs. The probability is, that the *Wasp* foundered either in a gale, or in a squall, though she may have been lost by any of the other accidents of the ocean. A man-of-war, in particular, always runs a certain risk from her magazine, and as ships are known to have been blown up in port, it is probable that some which suddenly disappear are blown up at sea.

An incident occurred a few years after the last direct intelligence was received from this gallant ship, that suddenly and keenly revived the interest of the public, which had begun to settle into a saddened sympathy with the friends of those who had perished, in her fate. It will be remembered that Acting Lieutenant M'Knight, and Mr. Lyman, a master's mate, both of the *Essex*, had been exchanged by Captain Hillyar, and taken to Rio de Janeiro, in the *Phœbe*, with a view to make certain affidavits necessary to the condemnation of the American frigate. These gentlemen, after remaining some time in Brazil, took passage in a Swedish brig bound to England, as the only means of getting home. A long time passing without any intelligence from Mr. M'Knight and his companion, inquiries were set on foot, which terminated in ascertaining this fact, and, subsequently, in finding the master of the Swedish brig, who proved by his log-book and other documents, that he had fallen in with the *Wasp* 18, Captain Blakely, when his two passengers seized the occasion to put themselves under the flag.*

* *Extract from the Journal kept on board the Swedish brig Adonis, during a voyage from Rio de Janeiro towards Falmouth, in the year 1814.*

"August 23.—Left Rio de Janeiro; Stephen Decatur M'Knight, and James Lyman, passengers for England.

"October 9th.—In lat. 18deg. 35min. N., long. 30deg. 10min. W., sea account, at 8 o'clock in the morning, discovered a strange sail giving chase to us, and fired several guns; she gaining very fast. At half past 10 o'clock hove to, and was boarded by an officer dressed in an English doctor's uniform, the vessel also hoisted an English ensign. The officer proceeded to examine my ship's papers, &c. &c., likewise the letter-bags, and took from one of them a letter to the victualling-office, London. Finding I had two American officers as passengers, he immediately left the ship, and went on board the sloop of war; he shortly after returned, took the American gentlemen with him, and went a second time on board the sloop. In about half an hour, he returned again with Messrs. M'Knight and Lyman, and they informed me that the vessel was the United States sloop of war the *Wasp*, commanded by Captain Blakely, or Blake, last from France, where she had refitted; had lately sunk the *Reindeer*, English sloop of war, and another vessel which sunk without their being able to save a single person, or learn the vessel's name,—that Messrs. M'Knight and Lyman had now determined to leave me, and go on board the *Wasp*—paid me their passage in dollars, at 5s. 9d., and having taken their luggage on board the *Wasp*, they made sail to the southward. Shortly after they had left, I found that Lieutenant M'Knight had left his writing desk behind; and I immediately made signal for the *Wasp* to return, and stood towards her; they, observing my signal, stood back, came alongside, and sent their boat on board for the writing desk; after which they sent me a log-line and some other presents, and made all sail in a direction for the line; and I have reason to suppose for the convoy that passed on Thursday previous."

This is the last intelligence from the *Wasp*. It is sixteen days later than that brought in by the prize, and places the ship about 900 miles farther south, and about 600 miles farther west, than she was when Mr. Geisinger left her. There is little doubt that Captain Blakely intended to run down towards the Spanish main, and to pass through the West Indies in order to go into a southern port, according to his orders. There is only one other rumour in reference to this ship, that has any appearance of probability. It is said that two English frigates chased an American sloop of war off the southern coast, about the time the *Wasp* ought to have arrived, and that the three ships were struck with

The Peacock 18, Captain Warrington, went to sea from New York, in March, 1814, and proceeded to the southward, as far as the Great Isaacs, cruising in that vicinity and along the Florida shore, to Cape Canaveral. On the 29th of April, in lat. $27^{\circ} 47'$, N. long. $80^{\circ} 9'$ W. three sail were made to windward, under convoy of a large brig of war. The merchantmen hauled up to E. N. E., and the sloop of war edged away for the American ship. The two vessels were soon alongside of each other, when a close action commenced. The Peacock received two thirty-two-pound shot in the quarter of her fore-yard, from the first broadside of the enemy, which rendered the head-sails nearly useless. This injury compelled the Peacock to fight running large, and prevented much manœuvring, the combat being effectually decided by gunnery. At the end of 42 minutes the enemy struck, and possession was taken of him.

The prize was H. B. M. brig Epervier 18, Captain Wales. The Epervier was extensively injured, having received no less than 45 shot in her hull, and had 22 men killed and wounded. Her main-topmast was over the side, her main boom was shot away, her foremast tottering, her bowsprit badly wounded, standing rigging much cut, and she had five feet water in her hold. The Peacock received very little injury, that done the fore-yard being the principal, while her hull escaped almost entirely, not a round shot touching it. No person was killed, and only two men were wounded.

The Peacock was a heavier vessel than the Epervier, while, as usual, the disparity in the loss was infinitely greater than that in the force. The metal was nominally the same; but, if the shot of the Peacock were as short of weight as those of the Wasp are known to have been, she threw at a broadside only twenty pounds of metal more than her antagonist. The Epervier mounted 18 thirty-two-pound carronades, and it would seem had no chase guns; her crew consisted of 128 men. On board this vessel were found \$118,000 in specie.

In one hour after the retreat from quarters was beat, the Peacock had her fore-yard fished, and, in all respects, was ready again to

a heavy squall, in which the sloop of war suddenly disappeared. There is nothing surprising in a vessel of that size being capsized in a squall, especially when carrying sail hard, to escape enemies, but it would be very extraordinary if no traces of her should be found floating on the ocean, or drifted ashore. The rumour, like that of the action with the frigate, has probably no foundation.

Captain Blakely was a citizen of North Carolina. He received the portion of his education that was obtained on shore, in the University of his own state, and he entered the navy February 5th, 1800. He was in the Mediterranean under Preble, and saw the service usual to the officers of his rank. His first command was the Enterprise 14, and his second and last, the vessel in which he perished. He was married, and left an only child, a daughter, whom the legislature of North Carolina asked permission to educate. He lived to the age of 33. This gentleman enjoyed a high reputation in the service, which his short career, as a commander, fully justified. There is little doubt, had he survived, that Captain Blakely would have risen to the highest consideration in his profession. As it was, few officers have left better names behind them.

On board the Wasp, there perished with Captain Blakely, Lieutenants Reilly, Tillinghast, and Baury. Messrs. Reilly and Baury had been midshipmen in the Constitution when she took the Guerriere and the Java, and, after contending with the enemy successfully in four combats, it was their hard fate to die in the manner conjectured. Mr. Tillinghast was very active in the capture of the Boxer, and was an excellent officer. The present Captain Geisinger was the only officer saved from the Wasp.

engage. The *Epervier* struck about 11 A. M., and by sunset she was in a condition to carry sail. It was only by the greatest exertions, however, that she was, at first, kept from sinking.

Mr. J. B. Nicholson, the first lieutenant of the *Peacock*, was put in charge of the prize, with directions to make the best of his way to Savannah. The southern coast was then much infested by the enemy, and, as Captain Warrington knew that she was liable to be brought to action at any moment, he determined to convoy his prize into port. On the evening of the 29th of April, or the day of the capture, the vessels made sail, and the next afternoon they were abreast of Amelia Island, when two frigates were discovered at the northward, and to leeward. At Mr. Nicholson's request, Captain Warrington now took all the prize crew from the *Epervier* but that gentleman and sixteen officers and men, intending to send the prize into St. Mary's, and to haul to the southward with the *Peacock*, to lead the enemy off the coast. This plan succeeded, the *Peacock* getting rid of the frigate that chased her the next day. The *Epervier*, while subsequently running along the coast, on her way to Savannah, however, fell in with the other frigate, and keeping close in, in shoal water, the wind being light, the enemy manned his boats, and sent them in chase. There was a moment when the prize was in great danger of falling into the hands of her pursuers, for the boats got quite near, in her wake. In this critical situation Mr. Nicholson had recourse to a stratagem to keep them off. He used the trumpet as if full of men, and when the boats were the nearest, he issued an order, in a very loud voice, to make a yaw, in order to fire a broadside. This appearance of a readiness to engage intimidated the enemy, who abandoned his attempt at a moment when he might have carried the *Epervier* with little or no loss. On the 1st of May the brig arrived safely at Savannah, and, on the 4th, the *Peacock* came in also. Mr. Nicholson's steadiness and ingenuity were much applauded.

Shortly after the *Peacock* sailed on a cruise for the enemy's seas, the Bay of Biscay, the coast of Portugal, and among the Islands, constantly changing her position to elude the English squadrons. After passing over some of the best cruising ground in the Atlantic, the ship returned to New York, at the end of October, without having fallen in with an enemy of a force proper for her to engage. She captured, however, 14 sail of merchantmen.

The President 44, continued to cruise under the orders of Commodore Rodgers, and the Congress 38, under those of Captain Smith, with a similar want of success, when the merits of their commanders were considered. These two fine frigates traversed the Northern Atlantic, in a variety of directions, in company and singly, and yet it was never the good fortune of either to fall in with an enemy, that could be brought to action. The latter ship even went south of the equator, and one of her cruises extended to eight months, but her luck did not vary.

In one of his cruises Commodore Rodgers captured an enemy's man-of-war schooner, called the *Highflyer*, drawing her under his

guns by an artifice, and this was the only English man-of-war that he took during his command of this ship.

Early in February, 1814, the President returned from a cruise of 75 days, a brief account of which will show the manner in which this ship sought opportunities of meeting the enemy, as well as of that in which she was foiled. She sailed from Providence in December, 1813, and ran off to the southward and eastward, into long. 38° W., lat 18° N. Here she chased two large ships, under the impression that one was an Indiaman and the other a frigate, but both proved to be frigates, and the President was chased in her turn. On this occasion, the nearest vessel threw a shot over the American ship, her consort being close astern. Commodore Rodgers now went off Barbadoes, and after cruising some time for a convoy, he ran down among the Islands through the Mona passage, and towards the continent, striking soundings off St. Augustine. From this point the ship proceeded north, keeping as near the coast as the water would allow, until she got off Charleston. Remaining all day off the bar, Commodore Rodgers continued standing to the northward, following the coast as far as Sandy Hook. As this was completely running the gauntlet among the enemy, several cruisers were seen, but always in squadron, or under circumstances that prevented an engagement.

CHAPTER XV.

Capt. Barney's flotilla in the Chesapeake—Skirmishes with the enemy—Advance of the enemy upon Washington City—Defensive movements—Captains Barney and Miller wounded and taken prisoners—Vessels destroyed, and city taken—Attack on Baltimore—Death of Gen. Ross—Retreat of the enemy—Failure of the attack by water—Exchange of Capt. Barney—Sketch of his life.

THE general peace that, owing to the downfall of Napoleon, so suddenly took place in Europe, afforded England an opportunity of sending large reinforcements in ships and troops to America. Regiments that had entered France from Spain, were embarked in the Loire, with that object; and a land force of more than 30,000 men was soon collected in the interior, or on the American coast. The ships, also, were much increased in number; and, it would seem, that there was a moment when some in England were flattered with the belief of being able to dictate such terms to the republic, as would even reduce its territory, if they did not affect its independence. In carrying on the war, two separate plans appear to have been adopted. One aimed at conquest; the other at harrassing the coast, and at inflicting the injuries that characterise a partisan warfare.

In furtherance of the latter intention, a considerable force in ships and troops assembled in the waters of the Chesapeake, early in the

summer, when the enemy attempted expeditions of greater importance, and which were more creditable to his arms, than many in which he had been previously engaged against small, exposed, and defenceless villages. The warfare of 1813 had induced the government to equip a stronger force in the Chesapeake, than it had originally possessed, and Captain Joshua Barney, the officer whose name has already been mentioned with distinction, as the captor of the General Monk, was placed at its head. The vessels of the flotilla under the orders of Captain Barney, were principally barges carrying heavy guns, though there were a few galleys, and a schooner or two.

It would exceed the limits of a work of this nature, to enter into a minute relation of all the skirmishes to which the predatory warfare of the English, in the Chesapeake, gave rise; but it is due to the officers and men employed against them, to furnish an outline of their services. On various occasions, parties from the ships had conflicts with the detached militia, or armed citizens, who were frequently successful. Although it is a little anticipating events, it may be mentioned here, that in one of these skirmishes, Captain Sir Peter Parker, of the Menelaus, was killed, and his party driven off to its ship. In several other instances, captures were made of boats and their crews; the people of the country frequently displaying a coolness and gallantry that were worthy of trained soldiers. On the whole, however, the vast superiority of the enemy in numbers, and his ability to choose his time and place of attack, gave the English the advantage, and their success was usually in proportion.

The presence of Captain Barney's flotilla compelled the enemy to be more guarded, and his small vessels became cautious about approaching the shallow waters in calms, or in light winds. On the 1st of June, this active and bold officer left the Patuxent with the Scorpion, two gun-boats, and several large barges, in chase of two schooners. He was closing fast, by means of sweeps, when a large ship was discovered to the southward. Just at this moment the wind shifted, bringing the enemy to windward, blowing fresh and becoming squally. Signal was made for the flotilla to return to the Patuxent, as the weather was particularly unfavourable for that description of force, and the ship proved to be a two-decker. On re-entering the river, the wind came ahead, when the gun-boats began to sweep up under the weather shore. One of the latter being in some danger, Captain Barney anchored with the Scorpion and the other boats, and opened a fire, which immediately drove the enemy's schooners out of the river. On this occasion, the English pushed a barge in front which began to throw Congreve rockets. By this essay, it was found that the rockets could be thrown farther than shot, but that they could not be directed with any certainty. The ship of the line anchored at the mouth of the Patuxent; the enemy's barges kept hovering about it, and the American flotilla was anchored about three miles within the river.

Between the 4th and 8th of June, the enemy was joined by a rasée and a sloop of war, when Captain Barney removed his flotilla up

the river, to the mouth of St. Leonard's creek. On the morning of the 8th the British were seen coming up the river, the wind being fair, with a ship, a brig, two schooners, and fifteen barges, which induced Captain Barney to move up the St. Leonard's about two miles, when he anchored in a line abreast, and prepared to receive an attack. At 8 A. M. the ship, brig, and schooners anchored at the mouth of the creek, and the barges entered it, with the rocket-boat in advance.

Captain Barney now left the *Scorpion* and the two gun-boats at anchor, and got his barges, 13 in number, under way, when the enemy retreated towards their vessels outside. In the afternoon, the same manœuvre was repeated, the enemy throwing a few rockets without effect.

On the afternoon of the 9th, the ship of the line having sent up a party of men, the enemy entered the creek again, having 20 barges, but after a sharp skirmish, retired. The object of these demonstrations was probably to induce the Americans to burn their vessels, or to venture out within reach of the guns of the ships, but the latter were commanded by an officer much too experienced and steady to be forced into either measure without sufficient reason. On the 11th, a still more serious attempt was made, with 21 barges, having the two schooners in tow. Captain Barney met them again, and, after a sharper encounter than before, drove them down upon their larger vessels. On this occasion, the pursuit was continued, until the *rasée*, which, by this time, had ascended the *Patuxent*, and the brig, opened a fire on the Americans. In this affair, the English are thought to have suffered materially, especially one of the schooners. A shot also struck the rocket-boat.

Some small works were now thrown up on the shore, to protect the American flotilla, and the blockade continued. In the mean time, Captain Miller, of the marine corps, joined the flotilla, and a considerable force of militia was collected under Colonel Wadsworth, of the ordnance service. The enemy had also brought a frigate, in addition to the *rasée*, off the mouth of the creek. The largest of these vessels was believed to be the *Severn*, and the smallest the *Narcissus* 32. On the 26th, an attempt was made by the united force of the Americans to raise the blockade. The cannonade was close, for the species of force employed, and it lasted two hours, when the *Severn* cut, and was run on a sand bank to prevent her sinking.* It is said that a raking shot ripped a plank from her bow, and placed her in imminent danger. Shortly after, in company with the *Narcissus*, she dropped down the river, and went into the bay. In this handsome affair, the flotilla lost 13 men in killed and wounded; but it effectually raised the blockade, and induced the enemy to be more cautious.

The portion of the flotilla that was in the *Patuxent*, remained in that river until the middle of August, when the enemy commenced that series of movements, which terminated in his advance upon

*By some accounts this ship was the *Loire*.

Washington. On the 16th, Captain Barney received intelligence that the British were coming up the Patuxent in force, when he sent an express to the navy department for instructions. The answer was to land the men, and join the army that was hurriedly assembling for the defence of the coast, under General Winder, and, if pressed, to burn the flotilla.

On the 21st, the news was received that the enemy had landed a force of four or five thousand men at Benedict, and that he was marching in the direction of the capital. Captain Barney immediately landed 400 of his party, leaving the vessels in charge of Mr. Frazier, with orders to set fire to them, if attacked, and to join the main body, with as little delay as possible. The next day this order was executed, a strong detachment of seamen and marines approaching the flotilla to attack it.

On the 22d, Captain Barney joined the assemblage of armed citizens, that was called an army, at the Wood-Yard. The next day he marched into Washington, and took up his quarters in the marine barracks.

After a good deal of uncertainty concerning the movements of the enemy, it was understood he was marching directly on Washington, and that it was intended to fight him at Bladensburgh. The flotilla-men and marines left the Yard on the morning of the 24th, and they arrived at the battle-ground on a trot, and were immediately drawn up about a mile to the west of Bladensburgh, holding the centre of General Winder's position. After a short skirmish in front, where the enemy suffered severely in crossing a bridge, the militia fell back, and the British columns appeared, following the line of the public road. The entire force of the flotilla-men and marines, was about 500 men; and they had two eighteens, and three twelve-pounders, ship's guns, mounted on travelling carriages. Captain Barney took command of the artillery in person, while Captain Miller had the disposition of the remainder of the two parties, who were armed as infantry. The marines, 78 men in all, formed a line immediately on the right of the guns, while the seamen, 370 men, were drawn up a little in their rear, and on the right flank of the marines, on ground that permitted them to fire over the heads of the latter. Although the troops that were falling back did not halt, Captain Barney held his position, and as soon as the enemy began to throw rockets, he opened on him with a sharp discharge of round and grape. The column was staggered, and it immediately gave ground. A second attempt to advance was repulsed in the same manner, when the enemy, who, as yet, had been able to look down resistance by his discipline, advancing steadily in column, was obliged to make an oblique movement to his left, into some open fields, and to display. Here he threw out a brigade of light troops, in open order, and advanced in beautiful style, upon the command of Captain Barney, while the head of a strong column was kept in reserve in a copse in its rear. Captain Miller, with the marines, and that portion of the seamen who acted as infantry, met the charge in the most steady and gallant manner and after a short conflict, drove the British light troops back

upon their supporting column. In this conflict the English commanding officer, in advance, Colonel Thornton, with his second and third in rank, Lieutenant Colonel Wood, and Major Brown, were all wounded, and left on the field. The marines and seamen manifested the utmost steadiness, though it was afterwards ascertained that the light troops brought up in their front, amounted to about 600 men.

There can be no question, that a couple of regular regiments would now have given the Americans the day, but no troops remained in line, except the party under Captain Barney, and two detachments on his right, that were well posted. Having been so roughly handled, the enemy made no attempt to advance directly in front of the seamen and marines, but, after forcing the troops on their right from the field, by a demonstration in that direction, they prepared to turn the rear of Captain Barney, in order to surround him. While these movements were going on in front, a party of light troops had been thrown out on the enemy's right, and the militia having abandoned the ground, they were also beginning to close upon the Americans that stood. By this time, Captain Barney, Captain Miller, and several other officers were wounded; and victory being impossible, against odds so great, an order was given to commence a retreat. The defence had been too obstinate to admit of carrying off the guns, which were necessarily abandoned. All the men retired, with the exception of the badly wounded; among the latter, however, were Captain Barney and Captain Miller, who both fell into the enemy's hands. The loss of the latter in front of the seamen and marines, on this occasion, was near 300 men, in killed and wounded. Of the marines, nearly one-third were among the casualties; and the flotilla-men suffered considerably, though in a smaller proportion.

The people of the flotilla, under the orders of Captain Barney, and the marines, were justly applauded for their excellent conduct on this occasion. No troops could have stood better; and the fire of both artillery and musketry has been described as to the last degree severe. Captain Barney himself, and Captain Miller, of the marine corps, in particular, gained much additional reputation; and their conspicuous gallantry caused a deep and general regret, that their efforts could not have been sustained by the rest of the army.

As the enemy took possession of Washington, a perfectly defenceless straggling town of some eight or nine thousand inhabitants, that evening, and a considerable force in ships was ascending the Potomac, it was thought necessary to destroy the public property at the navy yard. At that time, a frigate, of the first class, called the *Columbia*, was on the stocks, and the *Argus* 18, and *Lynx* 12, had not long been launched. A small quantity of stores and ammunition had been removed, but on the night of the 24th, fire was communicated to the remainder. It is difficult to say why the vessels afloat were not scuttled, a measure that would have allowed of their being raised again, as it would have been impossible for the enemy to injure ships in that state, and much less to remove them. Indeed the expediency of setting fire to any thing has been questioned, since the enemy could not have done more. It is, however, just to remember,

that the sudden retreat of the English could not have been foreseen, and that they had a commanding naval force in the Potomac. The loss in vessels was not great; the *Columbia* 44, on the stocks, and the *Argus* 18, being the only two destroyed that were of any value. The *Lynx* escaped; and it would seem that the enemy was in too great a hurry to do her any injury. On this occasion, the *Boston* 28 was burned, though the ship was condemned. The hulk of the *New York* 36 escaped; but all the naval stores were consumed.

It is worthy of remark, that this, and the instance in which the *Adams* was burned in the *Penobscot*, were the only cases in the war, in which the enemy, notwithstanding his numerous descents, was ever able to destroy any public cruiser by means of his troops. In this respect, the difference between the war of 1812 and that of 1775, is strikingly apparent. During the former contest, indeed, the enemy succeeded in no assault on any place of size, although, encouraged by his success at Washington, an attempt was shortly after made on Baltimore.

To aid in resisting these descents which were believed, at the time, to be made by a force greatly exceeding that which was actually employed, the officers and men of the navy, who were in the vicinity, were collected on the shores of the Chesapeake. Commodore Rodgers, with the crew of the *Guerriere* 44, then nearly ready for sea, was withdrawn from Philadelphia; Captain Perry, of the *Java* 44, which ship was fitting at Baltimore, and Captain Porter, with other gentlemen of the service, had been actively employed on the banks of the Potomac, in endeavouring to intercept the return of the British ships that had ascended to Alexandria; a duty that could not be effected, however, for want of means and time. The guns at command were altogether too light. Some fighting occurred. Several gallant attempts with fire-ships were made, but the enemy's movements were too rapid, to allow of the necessary preparations in a country so thinly settled, and almost destitute of military supplies. In the course of this service, Commodore Rodgers repelled an attack on a small party of less than 50 men, that was made by the enemy in an attempt to cut off a lighter and a fire-vessel, on which occasion, Mr. Newcomb, Mr. Ramage, Mr. Forrest, and Mr. Stockton, of the *Guerriere*, were conspicuously useful. These gentlemen were also active in endeavouring to fire the enemy's ships, though unsuccessful. Most of these officers, and all their men, were ordered to Baltimore, when that town was threatened.

Baltimore was a much more formidable place to assail than Washington, being compact, and containing, at that time, more than 40,000 souls. Its water defences were respectable, though it had no other fortifications on the side of the land,* than those which were thrown up for the occasion. The seamen, both of the ships of war and of the flotilla, with the marines present, were all under the com-

* It may assist the foreigner who reads American history, if he is told that in America, there is no fortified town. Defences have been made to resist attacks by sea, and field works have been occasionally thrown up around different places, on emergencies, but no American town, in the old English colonies, was ever regularly walled and fortified.

mand of Commodore Rodgers, who made a judicious disposition of his force.

The enemy landed early on the 12th of September, near a place called North Point. While this was effecting, the British frigates, sloops, and bomb-vessels, under the command of Captain Nourse, of the *Severn*, proceeded up the Patapsco, with a view to cannonade and bombard the water defences of the town. Vice-Admiral Cochran, and Rear-Admiral Malcolm, were with this squadron. A brigade of seamen accompanied the army, under Captain Crofton. With this party Rear-Admiral Cockburn landed in person. The troops, as at Washington, were led by Major General Ross.

After proceeding about five miles, a small advanced party of the local militia momentarily checked the march of the enemy, falling back, agreeably to orders, when it found itself about to be surrounded. In the trifling skirmishes that occurred at this spot, Major General Ross was killed. A sharper encounter took place shortly after, in which the Americans had about 1500 men engaged. On this occasion, the militia had 24 men killed, and 129 wounded. They lost also, 1 officer and 49 privates, prisoners. According to the accounts of the enemy, he lost in both affairs, 290 in killed and wounded. Shortly after the second skirmish, the English retreated to the place of debarkation, and abandoned the enterprise. The armed citizens of Baltimore and its vicinity, composed the force that met the enemy on this occasion.

The attack by water was equally unsuccessful. Fort M'Henry was bombarded for twenty-four hours, without making any serious impression on it. A small battery in advance, manned by officers and men of the flotilla, although much exposed, returned the fire to the last. In the course of the night, a strong brigade of boats pushed into the Ferry Branch, and would have gained the harbour, had it not been received by a warm fire from Forts Covington and Babcock, as well as from the barges of the flotilla. The defence was found to be too animated, and the enemy retreated. Fort Covington was manned by 80 seamen of the *Guerriere*, under Mr. Newcomb, a very excellent young officer of that ship; and Mr. Webster, a sailing-master, with 50 men of the flotilla, was in the six-gun battery called Babcock. The barges were under the orders of Lieutenant Rutter, the senior officer present, in that branch of the service. All these gentlemen, and their several commands, distinguished themselves by their steadiness and efficiency.

The barges, in particular, though exposed for nearly a day and a night to the shells and rockets of the enemy, maintained their position with unflinching firmness, and when more closely attacked, repelled the enemy with ease. At a most critical moment, several vessels were sunk in the channel, which would have completely prevented the enemy from bringing up his heavy ships, had he seen fit to attempt it. The duty was performed with coolness and expedition by Captain Spence.

The failure virtually terminated the warfare in the Chesapeake, the enemy shortly after collecting most of his forces at the south, with a

view to make a still more serious attempt on New Orleans. Small predatory expeditions, however, continued in this quarter, to the close of the war, though they led to no results of sufficient importance to be mentioned. This warfare was generally beneficial to the American government; the excesses into which the enemy were led, whether intentionally or not, having the effect to disgust that portion of the population which had been seriously averse to the conflict; and the administration was probably never stronger, than after the wanton destruction of the public buildings at Washington. About this time, Captain Barney* was exchanged, and he resumed his former command, less than half of his flotilla having been destroyed in the Patuxent.

* Joshua Barney was born in Baltimore, July 6th, 1759. He went to sea young, and by some accidental circumstances, was early thrown into the command of a valuable ship. At the commencement of the war of the Revolution, or in October, 1775, he entered on board the *Hornet* 10, which was fitted at Baltimore, as a master's mate, and sailed in the expedition under Commodore Hopkins, against the Bahamas. The *Hornet* was separated from the squadron, by bad weather, and returned to port alone. He next joined the *Sachem* 10, Captain Alexander, as a lieutenant, though his name is not found on the regular list of the service, until July 20, 1781, when it appears by the side of those of Dale and Murray. From this fact, it is to be inferred that the first commission regularly received from Congress, by either of those distinguished young sailors, was given at that time. But Mr. Barney served even as a first lieutenant of a frigate at a much earlier day. He was in that station on board the *Virginia* 28, when taken by the enemy; and he also served in the same rank, on board the *Saratoga* 16. Mr. Barney escaped the fate of the *Saratoga*, in consequence of having been in a prize.

After serving in a very gallant manner on board of different vessels of war, as a lieutenant, and in several private cruisers as commander, Mr. Barney was appointed to the *Hyder Ally*. For the manner in which he received this command, and the brilliant action he fought in that ship, the reader is referred to the text. From the year 1782 to that of 1804, Captain Barney served in the *General Washington*, (late *General Monk*), being most of the time employed as a despatch vessel, or on civil duty of moment. It is not easy to say what was the regular rank of Captain Barney at this period. That he was a lieutenant in the public marine is certain, but it does not so clearly appear that he was appointed to be a captain. Of his claim to this distinction there is no question, though it would seem that the peculiar state of the country prevented this act of justice from being performed. When the *General Washington* was sold, Captain Barney retired to private life, and, like all his brother officers of the marine of the Revolution, was disbanded.

In 1794, Captain Barney was one of the six captains appointed in the new navy, but he declined taking the commission on account of the name of Captain Talbot preceding his own. In 1796, Captain Barney went to France, and not long after, he was induced to enter the French navy, with the rank of *chef de division*. On the 28th of May, he sailed from Rochefort for St. Domingo, in *l'Harmonie* 44, having *la Raillieuse* 36 in company, and under his orders. After cruising some time with these ships, to which a third was subsequently added, he got the command of *la Meduse* and *l'Insurgente*, the latter being the frigate that was eventually lost in the American navy. With these two ships he came to America, and was watched, for several months, by a superior English squadron. The manner in which Commodore Barney got to sea, when he was ready to sail, has always been greatly admired. The French frigates dropped down gradually towards the sea, the enemy moving out before them, until the former had anchored just within the capes, and the latter were watching them in the offing. As soon as it became dark, Commodore Barney lifted his anchors and stood up the bay, until far enough to be out of sight, when he again brought up. The next morning, missing him, the English supposed he had got to sea in the night, and made sail in chase. Commodore Barney, in the meanwhile, followed his enemies off the coast, altering his course in time to avoid them.

In 1800, Commodore Barney quitted the French service, and returned home. He was engaged in commerce until the war of 1812. The navy, by that time, had become too regular to allow of his being received into it, and he accepted the command of a privateer. He made only one cruise in this vessel, and in 1813, was put at the head of the flotilla in the Chesapeake, with the rank of a captain in the navy, though not properly in the service. His gallant conduct in that station has been shown. After the war of 1812 he held a civil station under the government, and died at Pittsburg, on his way to Kentucky, December 1st, 1818, in the 59th year of his age. The wound received at Bladensburg is supposed to have caused his death.

CHAPTER XVI.

The enemy's fleet, Admiral Cockrane, appears off the mouth of the Mississippi—New Orleans—Movements of the enemy—Commencement of hostilities—Handsome resistance of Lieut. Jones—Action on Lake Borgne—Surrender of Lieut. Jones' flotilla, after a gallant defence—Landing of the British troops below New Orleans, under Gen. Keane—Gen. Jackson marches against the enemy—Assistance of the Carolina, Capt. Patterson, in the defence—She blows up—Battle of New Orleans—Naval officers who distinguished themselves.

THE movements in the Chesapeake were made by a force that was assembled for other and greater objects, to undertake which it only waited for reinforcements. The principal expedition of the year was not commenced until near the close of the season, when Admiral Cochrane, after collecting, in the different islands, a large number of ships of war, transports, and store-vessels, suddenly appeared off the mouth of the Mississippi. This was at the commencement of December, 1814, and there was no doubt, from the first, of a design to make a formidable attempt on the important town of New Orleans, most probably with a view to permanent conquest.

The defences of the place, with the exception of some respectable fortifications that commanded the river, were of a very trifling nature. The latter were formidable, and they rendered it necessary to make either a descent in some of the bayous, by means of boats, or to destroy the works by bombardment. As the latter required time, which would allow the Americans to assemble a force to resist the invasion, and was of doubtful issue, the former project was adopted. To hazard an attempt of the sort decided on, however, it became necessary to obtain the command of those shallow waters, by which the approach could only be made. To this object, therefore, the enemy first directed his attention.

At the immediate point where New Orleans stands, the Mississippi runs nearly east and west, the site of the place being on the left bank of the river. Directly north of the town, distant but a few miles, lies a large body of shallow water, that is called Lake Ponchartrain, though, in truth, it is merely a bay separated from the waters of the gulf, by a passage so narrow as to resemble a river. This passage is called the Rigolets. Another deep bay that puts in from the gulf, and which is connected with Ponchartrain by means of the Rigolets, is called Lake Borgne, though it deserves the name of a lake still less than the adjoining estuary. Vessels of a light draught can approach quite near the town by means of these two bodies of water, either by entering Lake Ponchartrain or not, while the ascent of the Missis-

Captain Barney, or Commodore Barney, as it was usual to call him, in consequence of his rank in the French service, was a bold, enterprising, and highly gallant officer. His combat with the *Monk* was one of the neatest naval exploits on record; and, in all situations, he manifested great spirit, and the resources of a man fitted to command. There is little question that he would have been one of the most distinguished officers of the service, had he remained in it; and as it is, few Americans enjoy a more enviable professional reputation. Captain Barney is said to have been engaged in 26 combats, all of which were against the English, and in nearly all of which he was successful.

sippi is long, difficult, and extremely crooked. To command the approach of the river, the fortifications just mentioned had been erected, while the government was obliged to rely principally on the navy to furnish a protection for the lakes. The use of steam at that day was in its infancy, and the water being too shallow for vessels of any size, no better craft offered for this purpose than the ordinary gun-boats. With this view a division of these vessels, accompanied by a few light tenders, was kept in the lakes, and it became necessary to the enemy to destroy this force before he could trust his boats loaded with troops beyond the protection of the guns of his ships.

On the 12th of December, when the enemy's fleet first made its appearance off the entrance of Lake Borgne, a division of five gun-boats was in that bay, under the command of Mr. Thomas Ap Catesby Jones, then a young sea-lieutenant. As soon as Mr. Jones was apprised of the appearance of the enemy, he reconnoitered his force, and having ascertained its strength, he retired higher into the bay, with a view to take a position to command the approaches towards the town. There were several small forts, either at the entrance of Lake Ponchartrain, or at the mouth of different bayous, or creeks, that put up into the low swampy grounds below New Orleans, and it was the intention of Mr. Jones to anchor near one of them, at a place called *les Petites Coquilles*. His vessels consisted merely of gun-boats, No. 5, commanded by Mr. Ferris, a sailing-master, and mounting 5 guns, with a crew of 36 men; No. 23, Acting Lieutenant M'Keever, 5 guns and 39 men; No. 156, Lieutenant Commandant Jones, 5 guns and 41 men; No. 162, Acting Lieutenant Spedding, 5 guns and 35 men; and No. 163, Mr. Ulrick, a sailing-master, 3 guns and 21 men; making a united force of 23 guns and 183 men. The metal varied, some of the boats having two long heavy guns, others but one, and all having two or three short lighter pieces. The vessels themselves, like all gun-boats, were low, easy of entrance, slow in their movements, and totally without quarters.

Some movements of the enemy, who appeared with a large flotilla of barges and boats in the bay, induced Mr. Jones to expect an attack, on the 13th, and he got under way from the position he then held, at 3 30 P. M., to attain *les Petites Coquilles*, as mentioned. A small tender, called the *Seahorse*, had been despatched into the Bay of St. Louis, a short time previously, to destroy some stores, and about 4 o'clock the enemy sent three boats in after her, to cut her out. The *Seahorse* carried one light six-pounder, and had but 14 men. She was commanded by Mr. Johnson, a sailing-master. A few discharges of grape drove back the boats, which were soon reinforced, however, by four more, when a spirited engagement ensued. This was the commencement of actual hostilities, in the celebrated expedition against New Orleans. Mr. Johnson having got a position where he was sustained by two sixes on the shore, made a handsome resistance, and the barges retired with some loss. A few hours later, however, the *Seahorse* and stores were set on fire by the Americans themselves, as it was not possible to prevent them from eventually falling into the hands of a force as formidable as that brought up by the enemy. Not long after, another tender, called the *Alli-*

gator, armed with a four-pounder, and with a crew of only 8 men, fell into the hands of the English.

About 1 A. M. on the 14th, the flotilla, which had been endeavouring to gain a better position, was compelled to anchor in the west end of the passage of Malheureux Island, on account of a failure of wind, and of the strength of the current. At daylight the boats of the enemy were seen, having brought up about three leagues to the eastward. It was a perfect calm, and a strong ebb tide setting through the pass, no alternative was left Mr. Jones, but to prepare obstinately to defend, or to abandon his vessels. He gallantly determined on the first, although the force that would be brought against him was known to be overwhelming. Arrangements were accordingly made to resist the expected attack to the utmost. It had been the intention to form the five gun-boats with springs on their cables, directly across the channel, in a close line abreast, but the force of the current deranged the plan, Nos. 156 and 163 having been forced about a hundred yards down the Pass, and that much in advance of the three other boats. The approach of the enemy prevented an attempt to repair this great disadvantage, which exposed the vessels mentioned to being assailed while, in a measure, unsupported by their consorts. When the character of the resistance is considered, it appears probable that this accident alone prevented a victory from having been obtained.

The English flotilla consisted of between 40 and 50 barges and boats, the former expressly constructed for the purpose of the invasion, and they are said to have mounted 42 guns, principally carronades of the calibers of 12, 18, and 24 pounds. The number of men embarked in these boats has been computed as high as 1200 by some accounts, while by others, it has been put as low as 400. The size and number of the barges, however, render the latter account improbable, ten men to a boat being altogether too few to gain belief. The truth would be apt to lie between the extremes.

At 10 39, A. M., the enemy raised his grapnels and kedges, and forming in open order, in a line abreast, he pulled up steadily to the attack. When near enough to be reached by shot, the gun-boats opened a deliberate fire on the approaching barges, though with little effect, as they presented objects too small to be aimed at with any accuracy. At 11 10, however, the enemy opened a fire through his whole line, and the action immediately became general and destructive. At 11 49, the enemy was near enough to make an attempt to board 156, which vessel was much exposed by her advanced position. Three boats dashed at her, but two were sunk, and the attack was repulsed. It was renewed by four boats, which were also beaten off with a heavy loss. In repelling this last attack, however, Mr. Jones was shot down, when the command devolved on Mr. Parker, a young midshipman, who defended his vessel until he was severely wounded himself, and was overpowered by numbers. The enemy got possession of No. 156 at 12 10, and he immediately turned her guns on the other American boats. No. 163 was next carried, after a very gallant resistance, and No. 162 followed, but not until Mr.

Spedden was severely wounded. The twenty-four-pounder of No. 5 had been dismounted by the recoil, and the fire of the captured boats having been turned on her, she was also compelled to submit. No. 23, Mr. M'Keever, was the last vessel taken, hauling down her flag about 12 30, when under the fire of the captured boats, and all the enemy's remaining force. Captain Lockyer of the *Sophie* commanded the English flotilla on this occasion, assisted by Captain Montresor of the *Manley*, and Captain Roberts of the *Meteor*.

Although the loss of this division of gun-boats was a serious impediment to the defence of New Orleans, both the country and the service looked upon the result of the combat as a triumph. On the latter, in particular, the resistance made by Mr. Jones, and the officers and men under his orders, reflected great honour, for it was known to have been made almost without hope. Circumstances compelled the assailed to fight to great disadvantage, and it would seem that they struggled to render their chances more equal by a desperate but cool gallantry. In consequence of the character of this defence, it is usually thought, in the service, to bestow as much credit on an officer to have been present at the defeat of Lake Borgne, as to have been present at a signal victory.

There is the same disagreement in the published accounts of the loss of the British on this occasion, as in the published accounts of their force. It was the opinion of Lieutenant Commandant Jones, who was carried on board the enemy's fleet, that their killed and wounded amounted to nearly 400, while other prisoners, who, from not having been wounded, had perhaps better opportunities for ascertaining facts of this nature, have never placed it lower than between 200 and 300 men. By the official statement of the enemy, as published, his loss was 94. As this was more than half of the number of the Americans engaged, it proves the gallantry of the resistance, but it is believed that the true account was varied for the purpose of effect.* The American loss, though severe, was comparatively trifling.

The command of the naval force at New Orleans had been given to Captain Patterson, one of the young officers who had been a prisoner at Tripoli with Captain Bainbridge. Captain Patterson was a master commandant, and he was assisted by many excellent officers, but his force was merely intended to command the river and the

* The disagreement in official accounts, in matters that will not well admit of mistakes, leaves no choice but to suppose intentional departures from facts somewhere. In the British official account of the battle of New Orleans, (8th January, 1815,) their loss in killed is stated at 293. It is well known that the field was left in possession of the Americans, and that they transferred the dead to the English for burial. In his letter of the 9th of January, General Jackson says, "upwards of 300 have already been delivered over for burial, and my men are still engaged in picking them up, within my lines and carrying them to the point where the enemy are to receive them." Colonel Hayne, the American Inspector General, under whose orders the dead were given up, on the 13th, reports them at 700. The English report their missing at 475, and Colonel Hayne reports the prisoners at 501. A private letter, written on the 13th says, "in one small spot alone, on the left of our lines, they found 368 dead bodies," or 75 more than the total loss of the enemy's official account. It was of so much importance to impress the seamen with the idea that the danger of attacking in boats was not great, that we find a motive for the difference in the accounts of the two parties, in the affair of Lake Borgne. It by no means follows that an officer writes what is published.

shallow waters in the vicinity of the town. A ship called the *Louisiana* had been purchased and armed with 16 long twenty-fours. Men were pressed in the streets for the emergency, under a law of the state, and the command of the vessel was given to Lieutenant C. B. Thompson.

The enemy finding himself in command of Lake Borgue, by the capture of the gun-boats, sent up a brigade of troops, under Major General Keane, which succeeded in entering a bayou, and in landing but a few miles below the town. Here he encamped, after advancing to some hard ground, on the night of the 23d of December, with his left flank resting on the Mississippi. No sooner was the position of the British known to the Americans, than General Jackson marched against them with all the disposable force he could assemble, making a total of about 1500 men, and by a prompt and spirited night attack he saved New Orleans. The movements of the troops on this occasion, were preceded by Captain Patterson's dropping down abreast of the English bivouac, in the U. S. schooner *Carolina 14*, and opening a most galling fire. The excellent use made of this little vessel, on the 23d, as well as her continuing to threaten the left flank of the enemy, materially contributed to the general success of the campaign, there being no question that the check received by the English in the action just mentioned, alone prevented him from marching into New Orleans, from which town he was distant only a few miles. It had been intended that the *Louisiana* should join in this attack, but the ship could not be got ready in time.

A few days later, however, the *Carolina* was very critically placed. The enemy had landed some guns, and the wind having blown fresh for some time at N. N. W., it had been found impossible to ascend the stream against the current that was even too strong for warping. The armament of the schooner consisted only of twelve-pound carronades, and one long gun of the same caliber. On the morning of the 27th, the wind being quite light at the northward, the enemy opened upon the *Carolina* with hot shot and shells, from a five-gun battery. The cannonade was returned from the long twelve, the only piece that could be used, but the schooner was soon set on fire, beneath her cable tiers, and a little after sunrise Captain Henley was compelled to give orders to abandon her. Before this could be effected, 7 men were killed and wounded, and the vessel was much injured by shot. Shortly after the crew had got on shore, the *Carolina* blew up. During four or five of the most critical days of the campaign, this little vessel rendered signal service, and the enemy have always paid a just tribute to the spirit, judgment, and intrepidity with which she was managed. Her behaviour on the night of the 23d, reflected great credit on Captain Patterson, and on all under his orders.

The *Louisiana* was now the only vessel in the river, and she covered the flank of the American lines. On board this ship Captain Patterson repaired, after the loss of the *Carolina*. On the morning of the 28th, an advance of the enemy against the American troops, drew a fire from and upon the ship, which was maintained for seven

hours. In the course of this long cannonade, the *Louisiana* threw 800 shot among the enemy, though she suffered very little in return.

After the destruction of the *Carolina*, her officers and people volunteered to man some of the heavy guns that were mounted on the American lines, and they had a share in all the subsequent successes obtained on shore. Captain Patterson also erected a battery on the right bank of the river, which was put up under the orders of Captain Henley, and was of material use. On the 8th of January the English made their grand assault, and were defeated with dreadful slaughter. In this extraordinary battle, the loss of the enemy was computed at from two to three thousand men, more than two thousand having been killed and wounded. The seaman's battery on the right bank of the river was temporarily abandoned, but the *Louisiana* was of great use, and the officers and men of the service distinguished themselves by their activity, zeal, and courage. On this occasion Captain Henley was wounded. One gun, in particular, commanded by Mr. Philibert, a midshipman, was served in a manner to attract general attention. The *Louisiana* continued to assist in annoying the enemy, until the night of the 18th, when the English retreated to their boats, and embarked, abandoning their attempt altogether.

Captain Patterson immediately despatched several officers, in command of expeditions, to intercept and annoy the enemy on their retreat, though the want of a direct communication between the river and the lakes, prevented the employment of any vessels larger than boats, on this service. Mr. Thomas Shields, a purser, who had previously been a sea-officer, and who had 6 boats and 50 men under his orders, was so fortunate as to capture one of the enemy's large boats, with 40 officers and men of the 14th light dragoons, and 14 seamen on board. After securing these prisoners, Mr. Shields captured a barge and a transport schooner, and subsequently five other boats, making in all 83 more prisoners. Some skirmishing occurred, and Mr. Shields lost one or two of his prizes and prisoners, but he succeeded in bringing in with him 78 of the latter, besides destroying several boats. Mr. Johnson, a sailing-master, also performed some service of the same nature with credit, destroying a transport and capturing a party of men.

In all the important service performed in front of New Orleans, during this short but arduous campaign, the navy had a full share, though its means were necessarily so limited. Captain Patterson, Captain Henley, Lieutenants Jones, Thompson, M'Keever, Spedden, Cunningham, Norris, Crowley, with several sailing-masters and midshipmen, distinguished themselves, on different occasions. The service also witnessed with peculiar satisfaction the intelligence and spirited conduct of Mr. Shields, an officer who had received his training in its own school. The marine corps had its share, too, in the honours of this glorious campaign, a small detachment of it having acted with its usual good conduct, under the command of Major Carmick, who was wounded in the affair of the 28th of December.

Although it will be exceeding the rigid limits of a strictly nautical

work, this chapter cannot be closed without paying a tribute to the gallant band of armed citizens that, in the main, drove the enemy from the shores of Louisiana. The attempt was made under the false impression, which had been industriously circulated in Europe, of an extensive disaffection to the American Union; a delusion that was soon destroyed at the point of the bayonet. It would be difficult to find another instance in history in which a population, deficient in arms, organisation, training, and numbers, so signally defeated a powerful force of disciplined troops, accustomed to war, or manifested the same degree of promptitude, unanimity, and spirit, in preventing their firesides from being violated by the presence of a licentious soldiery, as was the fact with the defenders of New Orleans.

CHAPTER XVII.

British and American force on Lake Ontario—Resources of the two countries—Attack on Sacketts Harbour—Lieut. Woolsey defends against six British vessels—Appointment of Com. Chauncey—Six schooners purchased and equipped—Forces compared—Upper Lakes—Attack on, and capture of the British brigs *Detroit* and *Caledonia*, by Lieut. Elliot—he receives a sword from Congress—Part of the *John Adams'* crew reach Buffalo—Com. Chauncey puts out in squadron—The *Royal George* retires under the batteries of the enemy—Accident on board the *Pert*—Capture by the *Hamilton* and *Growler*—Descent upon the British ports on Niagara river—Gallant conduct of Lieut. Angus—The enemy's batteries carried, guns spiked and barracks burned—Marvelous escape of Messrs. Dudley, Holdup and Wragg.

WE have now reached a period when it has become proper to advert to events on the different lakes, which were the scenes of some of the most important, as well as of the most interesting incidents of the war. In order to do this, it will be necessary to return to the commencement of hostilities, for the whole of this portion of the subject has been reserved, in order to lay it before the reader in a continued narrative, having no immediate connexion with its other branches.

The English government had long maintained a small naval force on the great lakes; though much the larger portion of Champlain being within the jurisdiction of the United States, it had kept no cruiser on that water. On Lake Ontario, however, there were several vessels, as early as the commencement of the century, one of which was a ship called the *Earl of Moira*. When the American government caused the *Oneida 16* to be built, that of the *Canadas* laid down the keel of a ship called the *Royal George*, which was pierced for 22 guns, and which was about one half larger than the American vessel.

The *Oneida* was manned and equipped at the declaration of the war, and was still under the command of Mr. Woolsey, who had built her four years previously. The naval station on the American side of the lake was at Sackett's Harbour, a beautiful and safe basin, not

far from the commencement of the St. Lawrence, while that of the British was nearly opposite, at Kingston. The enemy, however, had greatly the advantage in ports, those of the north shore of this lake being generally the most commodious and easy of entrance, though probably not as numerous as those of the south. The English also possessed a material advantage over the Americans, in all the warfare of this region of country, whether on the water, or on the land, in the age and more advanced civilisation, and consequently, in the greater resources of the settlements on their southern frontier, over those on the northern frontier of the United States. It being a common error to associate with the facts, the very reverse of this state of things, as settlements recede from the ocean, it may be useful to explain the cause.

The views of the French, when they held the Canadas, extending to a union between these northern provinces, and those they then occupied on the Gulf of Mexico and on the banks of the Mississippi, a line of posts had early been established along the great waters, and around these several spots settlements had been made, of course, some of which dated anterior to any of the possessions of the Dutch in New York, or of the English in Pennsylvania. Thus the country in the immediate vicinity of the Niagara river was as old, in the way of civilisation, as that in the vicinity of the city of New York; and in many respects it had all the appearances and advantages of its antiquity. The same was true of other points on the Canadian frontier. Kingston, which had been called Frontenac by the French, was a town of some size, and it enjoyed the facilities and resources that are produced by time and care. On the American shores of all the great waters, with an immaterial exception at Detroit, the very reverse was the case. The settlements were isolated, poor, and recent. Sackett's Harbour was an insignificant hamlet of a dozen houses; Oswego was but little larger, and no other place worthy to be called even a village, then existed on the American side of Lake Ontario. Ogdensburg, much the most important port in all that region, was a new village, about sixty miles down the St. Lawrence, and was of no use as a naval station. In addition to this great disadvantage, the larger lakes were bounded by broad belts of forest, with roads that were always bad, and sometimes nearly impassable. Between the Hudson and the shores of Ontario, a distance of 200 miles, there existed no other means of communication, at that day, than were offered by the ordinary highways, and an imperfect and interrupted navigation along the waters of the Mohawk, Wood Creek, Oneida Lake, and the rivers that flow from the latter into Lake Ontario. Supplies were consequently obtained with great difficulty, and at an enormous expense. On the other hand, the enemy, possessing the outlet of the St. Lawrence, and, in one sense, a command of the ocean, was enabled to convey all the required naval and military stores, from the ware-houses in England, to the dock-yards in the Canadas, by water. It will at once be understood that, while the scene of the warfare that is about to be related, was apparently at a vast distance from the seat of British power, as to all practical pur-

poses, it was nearer to the resources of that empire, than were the naval stations of America to the seaports of the republic.

At the time war was declared, England, however, had no officers of her royal marine on the American lakes, while those who belonged to the *Oneida*, and to the gun-boats on Champlain, were regularly trained, and bore commissions in the navy of the United States. There is no doubt that this circumstance materially influenced the results of the first acts of hostilities that occurred, the English vessels being conducted by a set of provincial seamen, who had never enjoyed a sufficient opportunity of acquiring the discipline, or of imbibing the spirit of a high-toned service. Still the British vessels, not long before, had been commanded by one who had passed his youth in the English navy, and a few of his inferiors had also possessed limited opportunities of learning its practice.

The great superiority of the enemy in force, notwithstanding his known inferiority in discipline and comparative efficiency, prevented Lieutenant Commandant Woolsey from inviting hostilities, which were permitted to come from the enemy. On the 19th of July, or about a month after war was declared, five sail were discovered from the fort at Sackett's Harbour, a few leagues in the offing, and shortly after, they captured a boat belonging to the custom-house, which they sent in, with a demand that the *Oneida* should be surrendered to them, as well as a schooner called the *Lord Nelson*, that had been captured not long before by the brig. The *Oneida* now got under way, and ran down to windward of the enemy's squadron, to try her sailing, and, if possible, to pass it, with a view to escape. Finding the latter impracticable, however, Lieutenant Commandant Woolsey beat back into the harbour, and anchored his brig close under a bank, where she could rake the entrance. All the guns of her off side were landed and mounted on the shore, presenting a force of 16 twenty-four-pound carronades in battery. On a height that commanded the offing, as well as the entrance, was a small fort; here a long thirty-two-pounder, that had been originally intended for the *Oneida*, in her legal character of a gun-boat, was mounted; and the enemy still remaining outside, Mr. Woolsey repaired to the spot, and took charge of the piece in person.

The enemy kept turning to windward, and having got within gunshot, he opened a slow, irregular, and ill-directed fire on the fort, brig, and batteries. His fire was returned; and, after a cannonade of about two hours, the English vessels bore up, and stood back towards Kingston. This was the commencement of hostilities on the lakes, and it fully proved the incompetency of the officers in charge of the enemy's force, for the duty with which they had been entrusted. The English vessels consisted of the *Royal George* 22, *Prince Regent* 16, *Earl of Moira* 14, *Duke of Gloucester*, *Seneca*, and the *Simcoe*.* On the part of the Americans, no harm was

* The English changed the names of their vessels in a way to render it very difficult to trace them, or to particularise their force. The *Earl of Moira*, a ship in 1812, was destroyed, under another name, as a brig, in 1814, and had been a schooner in the interval.

done; while the enemy is believed to have received some trifling injuries.

It is probable that the government of Canada was itself dissatisfied with the result of this first experiment of its naval forces, for soon after arrangements were made to send officers and men who belonged to the royal navy, upon the lakes. It was apparent to both nations, that the command of the inland waters was of great importance in carrying on the war of the frontiers, and each of the belligerents commenced systematic operations to obtain it. As the enemy was already much the strongest on Ontario, it was incumbent on the American government to take the first measures, and it set about them in earnest, very shortly after the beginning of hostilities. It being evident that the command was one of the most important that had ever been confided to an American officer, great care was necessary in the selection of the individual to whom this highly responsible and arduous duty was to be confided. The choice of the department fell on Captain Isaac Chauncey, then at the head of the New York navy yard; and it was generally admitted, by all conversant with his professional character, that a better selection could not have been made. Of tried firmness and spirit, Captain Chauncey was one of the best practical seamen of the age, and his knowledge of ships extended to all those details which would properly come within the scope of his duties. His orders were dated August 31st, 1812, and on the 6th of October, he arrived at Sackett's Harbour in person. As the command of Commodore Chauncey extended to all the lakes, with the exception of Champlain, he had employed the time that intervened between the date of his orders, and that of his arrival on the station, in organising and despatching the means for creating the necessary force. Forty ship-carpenters left New York on the first week of September, and more followed immediately. Instructions were sent to Mr. Woolsey, to purchase sundry small merchant vessels; and on the 18th of September, 100 officers and seamen left New York for Sackett's Harbour, with guns, shot, stores, &c.

The vessels used by the Americans in the navigation of Lake Ontario, were schooners, varying in size from 30 to 100 tons; and the first measure of Commodore Chauncey was to purchase a sufficient number of these craft to obtain the command of the lake, until others better fitted for war could be constructed. A selection was accordingly made of several of the most eligible, by Mr. Woolsey, and they were bought, armed, equipped, manned, and put into the service, under the names of the *Hamilton*, *Governor Tompkins*, *Conquest*, *Growler*, *Julia*, *Pert*, &c. &c. Neither of these schooners had the construction or the qualities requisite for vessels of war, but they were the best for the service contemplated that could then be found on those waters. Without quarters, their armaments consisted principally of long guns, mounted on circles, with a few of a lighter description, that could be of no material service, except in repelling boarders. The keel of a ship to mount 24 thirty-two-pound carronades, however, was laid down in September, or before the commanding officer reached the station.

In conjunction with the Oneida, the entire flotilla that could be made immediately available mounted 40 guns, and it was manned with 430 men, the marines included. As the armament of the Oneida was just 16 guns, it follows that there was an average of 4 guns each, among the six other vessels. At this time, the enemy was said to possess on Ontario, the Royal George 22, Earl of Moira 14, both ships; and the schooners Prince Regent 16, Duke of Gloucester 14, Simcoe 12, and Seneca 4; making a force in guns, more than double that of the Americans, with a proportionate disparity in the number of the crews. As cruising vessels, the enemy's squadron possessed an advantage in their size and construction, that greatly increased their superiority.

While these preparations were making on Ontario, the service on the other lakes was not overlooked. Owing to the manner in which the navigation is interrupted by the cataract of Niagara, there is no natural communication between the first of these great bodies of fresh water, and its more western neighbours, nor had any artificial means been attempted at that early day. It was necessary, in consequence, to construct and collect different squadrons, or flotillas for the different waters, a duty that greatly increased the expense of the preparations, and materially added to the arduous character of the command. As the supplies for the Indian warfare of the northwest, as well as the protection of the right flank of the enemy, depended, in a great measure, on the ability to navigate Erie and the upper lakes, as the contiguous waters are termed, both sides turned their attention early to the means of obtaining an ascendancy on the former, which, it was felt, must be the place where the contest was to be decided.

Previously to the war of 1812, there was no vessel on the upper lakes, that properly belonged to the American marine. A brig, called the Adams, however, had been constructed on these waters, for the convenience of the war department, which, under its own officers, had long found it useful in the transportation of stores and military supplies. This vessel had no proper quarters, though insufficient substitutes had been provided; and the peculiar service rendering her, at all times, liable to assaults from the savages of the interior, she had an armament of light guns. By the capture of Michigan, however, the Adams fell into the hands of the enemy, who changed her name to the Detroit, and took her into their service. At this time, the enemy possessed two or three other vessels on the upper lakes, and of course, this capture, for the moment, gave them complete command of the waters, between the outlet of Lake Erie and the head of Lake Michigan.

With a view to counteract this ascendancy Lieutenant J. D. Elliot was sent by Commodore Chauncey to the upper lakes, about the time that the latter officer appeared at Sackett's Harbour, with directions to purchase any suitable vessels that might be found, and to make preparations also for the creation of the necessary force in that quarter. While Mr. Elliot was thus employed, a fortunate concurrence of circumstances put it in the power of this officer to plan a

blow at the enemy, of which he availed himself with a spirit and promptitude that were highly creditable. On the morning of the 7th of October, the *Detroit* came down the lake, in company with another brig, called the *Caledonia*, and anchored under Fort Erie, and that very day intelligence was received that the first party of seamen intended for the lake was within a short march of the Niagara frontier. Orders were accordingly sent to hasten their arrival, which actually took place about noon of the same day.

Finding that the men were without arms, Mr. Elliot applied to Brigadier General Smythe, the officer in command of the troops on that frontier, who not only furnished the necessary means, but who permitted about fifty soldiers to volunteer to aid in the enterprise, under the orders of Captain Towson of the artillery, who also volunteered for the occasion.

Two of the large boats used in those waters, containing about 50 men each, partly seamen and partly soldiers, were prepared for the service, and a small boat, or two, were manned by a few civilians. The party attempted to pull out of Buffalo Creek, early in the evening of the 7th, but the large boats grounded on the bar. Here some delay occurred, it being found necessary for most on board to get into the water, before they could make the boats float again. It was consequently much later when the adventurers reached the stream.

As the enemy lay near their own shore, the party pulled some distance up the lake in order to get above his vessels, before they edged away. It was past midnight when they got near the two brigs, the *Detroit* lying highest up stream, and farthest from the land. The boat destined to attack the *Caledonia* was directed to lead, in order that both vessels might be assaulted as nearly as possible at the same moment. This boat was under the orders of Mr. Watts, a sailing-master, supported by Captain Towson, while Mr. Elliott, in person, had charge of the other boat, in which were Lieutenant Roach of the artillery, and Ensign Pressman of the infantry.

As the leading boat crossed the bow of the *Detroit*, the enemy took the alarm, and the party of Mr. Elliott, as it approached, received two volleys of musketry. Without regarding this, both boats pulled steadily on, that which led reaching the *Caledonia* in proper time, but it would seem that one of the grapnels missed, and she fell so far astern as to allow the enemy to make a stout resistance. Here the decision and spirit of Captain Towson were of material service, and the vessel was captured. Lieutenant Roach of the army, who was accustomed to the duty, steered the boat of Mr. Elliott, which was laid alongside of the *Detroit* with great steadiness and accuracy, when the party went aboard of the enemy, Lieutenants Elliott and Roach leading. The former had a narrow escape, his hat having been struck from his head, and at the same instant he nearly cleft the skull of the English commander, who discovered the greatest resolution. Being well supported, this brig was carried with great rapidity.

In this handsome affair, one man was killed, and a few were wounded, including Mr. Cummings a midshipman, in the boat of

Mr. Elliott, while that of Mr. Watts, owing to the circumstance mentioned, sustained rather more loss. Mr. Elliott reported the *Detroit* as carrying six long nines, and to have had a crew of fifty-six souls. The *Caledonia* mounted but two guns, and had a much smaller complement of men. About thirty American prisoners were found in the former vessel, and ten in the latter.

The *Caledonia* was brought successfully over to the *American side, but the *Detroit* met with greater difficulty. Mr. Elliott found himself obliged to drop down the river, passing the forts under a brisk fire, and anchoring within reach of their guns. Here a cannonade took place, during which fruitless efforts were made to get lines to the American shore, in order to warp the brig across. Finding himself assailed by the guns of the enemy's works, as well as by some light artillery, Mr. Elliott determined to cut, and drop out of the reach of the first, believing himself able to resist the last. This plan succeeded in part, but the pilot having left the vessel, she brought up on Squaw Island. The prisoners were now sent on shore, and shortly after Mr. Elliott left her, with a view to obtain assistance. About this time the enemy boarded the prize, but were soon driven out of her, by the artillery of Lieutenant Colonel Scott, the *Detroit* being commanded equally by the guns on both sides of the Niagara. Under such circumstances, the vessel was effectually rendered unfit for service, and in the end, after removing most of her stores, she was burned by the Americans.

This was the first naval success obtained by either nation, in the warfare on the lakes, and it was deemed a fortunate commencement for the Americans, on waters where they might hope to contend with their powerful foes, on an equality. The conduct of Mr. Elliott was much applauded, and Congress voted him a sword. His promptitude and decision were of great service, and it adds to the merit of all engaged, that the *Caledonia* was thought to be a brig of a force much superior to what she proved to be, when they left the shore. The army had an equal share, in the credit of this dashing little enterprise, Captain Towson, who in effect, commanded one of the boats, though it was necessarily managed by a sea-officer, having particularly shown decision and conduct. The names of Lieutenant Roach of the artillery, Ensign Pressman of the infantry, and of several volunteers from Buffalo, were also included in the eulogies of the commanding officer.

Not long after this successful exploit, part of the crew of the *John Adams* 28, which had been laid up at New York, reached Buffalo, to help man the force government intended to equip on Lake Erie. Mr. Angus his senior officer, accompanying this party, and there being a want of lieutenants on the other lake, Mr. Elliott now went below to join the vessels immediately under the orders of Commodore Chauncey. Before quitting this station, however, this officer had contracted for several schooners, that lay in the Niagara, but which it was subsequently found difficult to get into the lake on account of the enemy's batteries.

Commodore Chauncey first appeared on the lake on the 8th of

November, with his broad pennant flying on board the *Oneida* 16, Lieutenant Commandant Woolsey, and having in company the *Conquest*, Lieutenant Elliott; *Hamilton*, Lieutenant M'Pherson; Governor *Tompkins*, Lieutenant *Brown*; *Pert*, Mr. *Arundel*; *Julia*, Mr. *Trant*; and *Growler*, Mr. *Mix*; the three last named officers holding the rank of sailing-masters. The object in going out, was to intercept the return of the enemy's vessels, most of which were known to have been to the westward, conveying supplies to the army at Kingston. In order to effect this purpose, the American squadron, or flotilla, for it scarcely merited the former term, went off the *False Ducks*, some small islands that lie in the track of vessels keeping the north shore aboard. As it approached the intended station a ship was made in shore. She was soon ascertained to be the *Royal George*, then much the largest vessel that had ever been constructed on the inland waters of America. That a ship of her force should feel it necessary to retire before the *Oneida*, must be attributed to the circumstance of her not being properly officered, the enemy not having yet made their drafts from the royal navy for the service on the lakes. Commodore *Chauncey* chased the *Royal George* into the Bay of Quinté, and lost sight of her in the night. The next morning, however, she was seen again, lying in the narrow passage that leads down to Kingston. Signal was immediately made for a general chase, which was vigorously kept up, with alternate squalls and light airs, until the enemy was fairly driven in under the protection of his own batteries.

Although the wind blew directly in, and made a retreat difficult, Commodore *Chauncey* decided to follow the enemy, and feel his means of defence, with an intention of laying the ship aboard, should it be found practicable. Arrangements for that purpose were accordingly made, and a little before 3 P. M. the vessels that were up, got into their stations, and stood towards the mouth of the harbour. The *Conquest*, Lieutenant *Elliott*, led in handsome style, followed by the *Julia*, Mr. *Trant*, *Pert*, Mr. *Arundel*, and *Growler*, Mr. *Mix*, in the order named. The *Oneida* brought up the rear, it being intended to give time for the heavy guns of the schooners to open the way for a closer attack by the brig. The *Hamilton* and Governor *Tompkins* were a considerable distance astern, having been sent to chase, and did not close for some time.

At five minutes past 3, the batteries on *India* and *Navy Points* opened on the *Conquest*, but their fire was not returned until seven minutes later. In three minutes after the *Conquest* commenced firing, she was joined by the other three schooners in advance. The gun of the *Pert* bursted at the third discharge. By this accident, Mr. *Arundel*, her commander, was badly, and a midshipman and three men were slightly wounded. The vessel was rendered, in a great degree, useless, for the remainder of the day. The *Oneida*, though under fire for some time previously, did not open with her carronades on the *Royal George*, until forty minutes past 3, but when she did commence, the enemy was soon thrown into confusion, and at 4 P. M. he cut his cables, ran deeper into the bay, and made

fast to a wharf, directly under the protection of the muskets of the troops. Here, a part of her people actually deserted her, though they subsequently returned on board. Soon after, the Governor Tompkins, Lieutenant Brown, bore up off the harbour, in a beautiful manner, and engaged, having been preceded some time, with equal gallantry, by the Hamilton, Lieutenant M'Pherson. The action became warm and general, and was maintained with spirit for half an hour, the enemy firing from five batteries, the ship, and some moveable guns. It was now so near night, the wind blew so directly in, and the weather looked so threatening, that the pilots declared their unwillingness to be responsible any longer for the vessels, and Commodore Chauncey, who found the enemy much stronger on shore than he had been taught to believe, made the signal for the flotilla to haul off. When an offing of about two miles had been gained, however, the squadron anchored, with an intention to renew the attack in the morning.

In this spirited affair, which partook of the character of the assaults on Tripoli, and which was probably inferior to none of the cannonades on that town, for gallantry and vigour, after a due allowance is made for the difference in the force employed, the Americans suffered much less than might have been expected. The Oneida had one man killed and three wounded, and she received some damage aloft. The other vessels escaped even better, the audacity of the attack, as is so often the case, producing a sort of impunity. Mr. Arundel, of the *Pert*, however, who had refused to quit the deck, though badly wounded, was unfortunately knocked overboard and drowned, while the vessel was beating up to her anchorage.

The schooners behaved well on this occasion, creating a high degree of confidence on the part of Commodore Chauncey, in his officers and men, and a corresponding feeling of respect in the latter towards their commander. The steady manner in which all the vessels beat up to their anchorage, under a brisk fire from the enemy's guns and batteries, was not the least creditable part of their conduct, on this occasion. The loss of the *English* is not known, though it was evident that the *Royal George* suffered materially. The feebleness of their resistance was probably owing to the audacity of the attack, as they could not have anticipated that a force so small would presume to lie off a place amply provided with the means of defence.

On the morning of the 10th there was every appearance of a gale of wind, and the contemplated attack was deferred. At 7 A. M. a signal was made to weigh, and the flotilla turned out of a very narrow passage into the open lake, under a press of sail, the lateness of the season, and the known character of that tempestuous water, and the appearances of foul weather, rendering the measure prudent. Shortly after getting an offing, the *Simcoe* was seen and chased into shoal water, under a sharp fire from the Tompkins, Hamilton, and Julia, which cut her up a good deal. She escaped, however, by crossing a reef, though followed into nine feet water, by Mr. M'Pherson, in the Hamilton. It coming on to blow a gale, the pilots refused

to remain out any longer, and Commodore Chauncey was compelled to return to Sackett's Harbour.

While chasing in the Bay of Quinté, a schooner was captured by the Hamilton, and burned, and as the flotilla ran into Kingston it captured another, off the mouth of the harbour. It was found that this prize could not turn out of the passage next morning, with the other vessels, and the Growler, Mr. Mix, was directed to run down past the port with her, with a view to come up on the other side of the island, and with the hope that the appearance of these two vessels might induce the Royal George to come out in chase. The latter project failed, but the Growler got safe into Sackett's Harbour on the 13th, with this and another prize, a sloop, having on board a brother of the late General Brock.

Intelligence reaching Commodore Chauncey that the Earl of Moira was off the Ducks, he sailed the same day with the Oneida, in a snow storm, to capture her, but the enemy was too much on the alert to be caught by surprise, and the distances on the lake were too short to admit of his being easily overtaken in chase. The Oneida saw the Royal George and two schooners, but even these three vessels were not disposed to engage the American brig singly. The two schooners in company with the Royal George on this occasion, were supposed to be the Prince Regent and the Duke of Gloucester. Commodore Chauncey then went off Oswego to cover some stores expected by water. During this short cruise the Oneida narrowly escaped shipwreck, and the ice made so fast that it would have been impossible to work the carronades had there been a necessity for it. The Conquest, Tompkins, Growler, and Hamilton, notwithstanding, continued to cruise off Kingston, until the 17th of November. On the 19th the Commodore attempted to go to the head of the lake, but was driven back by a gale, during which so much ice was made as to endanger the vessel. The Growler was dismasted. Early in December the navigation closed for the season.

While these events were occurring on the lower lake, the navy was not altogether unemployed on the upper waters, although, as yet, not a single vessel had been equipped. A small body of troops had been collected at Buffalo under Brigadier General Smythe, and it was generally understood that it was the intention of that officer to make a descent on the Canada shore, as soon as a competent force was prepared. Towards the close of November, it was believed that the arrangements were in a sufficient degree of forwardness to admit of an attempt to drive the enemy from the batteries that lined the opposite shore, in order to clear the way for the landing of the brigade. To aid it in executing this important service, the army naturally turned its eyes for professional assistance towards the body of seamen collected at this point.

The men of the John Adams had encamped in the woods, near the river, and finding the enemy in the practice of cannonading across the Niagara, shortly after their arrival, they dove into the wreck of the Detroit, at night, made fast to, and succeeded in raising four of that vessel's guns with a large quantity of shot. These pieces were

mounted in battery, and a desultory cannonading was maintained, by both parties, until the arrival of some heavy guns from the sea-board, when the Americans got a force in battery, that enabled them completely to maintain their ground against their adversaries. In this manner, more than a month had passed, when the application was made to Mr. Angus, for some officers and seamen to assist in carrying and silencing the batteries opposite, in order to favour the intended descent. The arrangements were soon completed, and the morning of the 28th of November was chosen for the undertaking.

The contemplated invasion having separate points in view, the expedition was divided into two parties. One commanded by Captain King of the 15th infantry, was directed to ascend the current a little, in order to reach its point of attack, while the other was instructed to descend it, in about an equal proportion. The first being much the most arduous at the oars, the seamen were wanted especially for this service. Mr. Angus accordingly embarked in 10 boats, with 70 men, exclusively of officers, and accompanied by Captain King, at the head of a detachment of 150 soldiers. With this party went Mr. Samuel Swartwout of New York, as a volunteer. Lieutenant Colonel Boerstler commanded 10 more boats which conveyed the detachment, about 200 strong, that was to descend with the current.

The division containing the seamen left the American shore first, about 1 A. M. with muffled oars, and pulled deliberately, and in beautiful order, into the stream. That the enemy were ready to meet them is certain, and it is probable he was aware of an intention to cross that very night. Still all was quiet on the Canada side, until the boats had passed out of the shadows of the forest into a stronger light, when they were met with a discharge of musketry and the fire of two field pieces, that were placed in front of some barracks known by the name of the Red House. The effect of this reception was to produce a little confusion and disorder, and some of the officers and a good many men being killed or wounded, all the boats did not gain the shore. Those in which efficient officers remained, however, dashed in, in the handsomest manner, and the seamen in them landed in an instant. A body of the enemy was drawn up in front of the barracks, with their left flank covered by the two guns. As soon as the troops could be formed, the enemy's fire was returned, and a short conflict occurred. At this juncture a small party of seamen armed with pikes and pistols, headed by Mr. Watts, a sailing-master, and Mr. Holdup, made a détour round the foot of the hill, and charging the artilleryists, took the guns in the most gallant manner, mortally wounding and capturing Lieutenant King, who commanded them. At the same instant the remaining seamen and the troops charged in front, when the enemy broke and took refuge in the barracks.

The enemy's fire was now very destructive, and it became indispensable to dislodge him. Several spirited young midshipmen were with the party, and three of them, Messrs. Wragg, Holdup, and Dudley, with a few men, succeeded in bursting open a window, through

which they made an entrance. This gallant little party unbarred an outer door, when Mr. Angus and the seamen rushed in. In an instant, the straw on which the soldiers slept was on fire, and the barracks were immediately wrapt in flames. The enemy, a party of grenadiers, was on the upper floor, and finding it necessary to retreat, he made a vigorous charge, and escaped by the rear of the building. Here he rallied, and was attacked by Captain King, who had formed outside.

The party of seamen and soldiers now got separated, in consequence of an order having been given to retreat, though it is not known from what quarter it proceeded, and a portion of both the seamen and the soldiers fell back upon the boats and re-embarked. Mr. Angus, finding every effort to stop this retreat useless, retired with his men. But Captain King, with a party of the troops, still remained engaged, and with him were a few seamen, with Messrs. Wragg, Dudley, and Holdup at their head. These young officers fell in with the soldiers, and a charge being ordered, the enemy again broke and fled into a battery. He was followed, and driven from place to place, until, entirely routed, he left Captain King in command of all the batteries at that point.

Believing that their part of the duty was performed, the young sea-officers who had remained now retired to the shore, and crossed to the American side, in the best manner they could. Most of the seamen, who were not killed, got back, by means of their professional knowledge; but Captain King, and several officers of the army, with 60 men, fell into the enemy's hands, in consequence of not having the means of retreat. The attack of Colonel Boerstler succeeded, in a great degree, and his party was brought off.

Although this affair appears to have been very confused, the fighting was of the most desperate character. The impression made by the seamen with their pikes, was long remembered, and their loss was equal to their gallantry. The enemy was effectually beaten, and nothing but a misunderstanding, which is said to have grown out of the fact that the boats which did not come ashore at all, were supposed to have landed and then retreated, prevented the attack from being completely successful. Still, the batteries were carried, guns spiked, barracks burned, and caissons destroyed.

Owing to the nature of the service and the great steadiness of the enemy, who behaved extremely well, this struggle was exceedingly sanguinary. Of twelve sea-officers engaged, eight were wounded, two of them mortally. The entire loss of the party was about 30 in killed and wounded, which was quite half of all who landed, though some were hurt who did not reach the shore. The troops behaved in the most gallant manner also, and many of their officers were wounded. Both Mr. Angus and Captain King, gained great credit for their intrepidity.*

* Mr. Angus, the only commissioned sea-officer present, was also hurt by a severe blow in the head, from the butt of a musket, though not reported among the wounded. Messrs. Sisson and Watts, sailing-masters, died of their wounds. Mr. Carter, another master, was wounded. Of the midshipmen, Mr. Wragg, since dead, was wounded in the abdo-

As none of the great lakes are safe to navigate in December, this closed the naval warfare for the year, though both nations prepared to turn the winter months to the best account, while the coasts were ice-bound.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The new ship *Madison* launched at Sackett's Harbour—Two ships laid down at Presque Isle—Launch of the *Lady of the Lake*—Embarkation of the squadron under Com. Chauncey—Attack on York (Toronto)—its reduction—General Pike killed—Capture of the schooner *Duke of Gloucester*, and a vessel of twenty guns (nearly finished) destroyed—Attack on Fort George—Retreat of the enemy—Evacuation of the Niagara frontier by the British.

BOTH parties employed the winter of 1812–13 in building. In the course of the autumn, the Americans had increased their force to eleven sail, ten of which were the small schooners bought from the merchants, and fitted with gun-boat armaments, without quarters. In addition to the vessels already named, were the *Ontario*, *Scourge*, *Fair American* and *Asp*. Neither of the ten was fit to cruise; and an ordinary eighteen-gun brig ought to have been able to cope with them all, in a good working breeze, at close quarters. At long shot, however, and in smooth water, they were not without a certain efficiency. As was proved in the end, in attacking batteries, and in covering descents, they were even found to be exceedingly serviceable.

On the 26th of November, the new ship was launched at Sackett's Harbour, and was called the *Madison*. She was pierced for 24 guns, and her metal was composed of thirty-two-pound carronades, rendering her a little superior to the *Royal George*. Nine weeks before this ship was put into the water, her timber was growing in the forest. This unusual expedition, under so many unfavourable circumstances, is to be ascribed to the excellent dispositions of the commanding officer, and to the clear head, and extraordinary resources of Mr. Henry Eckford, the builder employed, whose professional qualities proved to be of the highest order.

men by a bayonet; Mr. Graham, now Commander Graham, lost a leg; Mr. Holdup, late Captain Holdup-Stevens, was shot through the head; Mr. Braillesford, since dead, was shot through the leg; and Mr. Mervine, now Captain Mervine, received a musket ball in the side. Mr. Dudley, since dead, went through the whole affair unhurt, though much exposed.

Messrs. Dudley, Holdup, and Wragg remained in Canada to the close of the fighting. These three young gentlemen, neither of whom was yet twenty, met at the water side about daybreak, and got into a leaky canoe, which Mr. Dudley brought out of a creek. The latter made two paddles of rails, by means of a battle-axe, and taking in three wounded seamen, and two that were unhurt, they put off from the English shore. Notwithstanding they bailed with their hats, the canoe sunk under them, close to Squaw Island. Here they dragged their wounded men ashore, got the canoe emptied, hauled her round to the American side, and made a fresh effort to cross, in which they succeeded, though the canoe was nearly filled again before they reached the shore. One of the wounded men died just as the party landed.

On the other hand, the enemy laid the keel of a ship a little larger than the *Madison*, which would have effectually secured the command of the lake, notwithstanding the launching of the latter, as their small vessels were altogether superior to those of the Americans; and the *Royal George* was perhaps strong enough to engage two brigs of the force of the *Oneida*. It became necessary, therefore to lay down a new ship at Sackett's Harbour, and for this purpose a fresh gang of shipwrights went up in February.

About this time, the enemy made choice of Captain Sir James Lucas Yeo, to command on the American lakes. This officer had lately been wrecked in the *Southampton 32*, and possessed a high reputation for spirit and conduct. So much importance was attached to the control of these waters, that great care was had in the selection of the officers who were to command on them. So sensible were both belligerents, indeed, of the necessity of struggling for the superiority, that each side appeared to anticipate an attack in the course of the winter, and it is known that one was actually meditated on the part of the Americans.

In the month of March, however, Commodore Chauncey proposed to the government an attack on York, (now Toronto,) instead of the one that had been contemplated on Kingston, giving such forcible reasons for changing the plan, that his advice was followed. It appears that the enemy had committed the fault of using two different ports for building, by which mistake he necessarily exposed himself to the risk of an attack against divided means of defence. As it might give the command of the lake, for some months at least, to destroy a single vessel of any size, the wisdom of the plan proposed by the American naval commander will be seen at a glance.

In the meantime, preparations were made for constructing a force on Lake Erie, two brigs having been laid down at Presque Isle, (now Erie,) during the month of March. But the fact that nearly the whole of the American side of this frontier was scarcely more than a wilderness, as well as that many of the roads which existed were little better than passages among marked trees, and during the spring and autumn were nearly impassable, rendered all the orders of the government exceedingly difficult to execute, and greatly retarded the preparations. To add to the embarrassments, it was found that men transported from the sea coast to those of the lakes, were liable to contract a debilitating fever, more especially when exposed, as those necessarily were who had no regular dwellings to receive them.

Fresh parties of seamen began to arrive at Kingston in March, where the new ship was fast getting ready.

On the 6th of April, Mr. Eckford put into the water, on the American side, a beautiful little pilot-boat schooner, that was intended for a look-out and despatch vessel. She was armed with merely one long brass nine on a pivot, and was called the *Lady of the Lake*. Two days later, the keel of the new ship was laid. She was considerably larger than the *Madison*.

About the middle of the month, the lake was considered safe to navigate, and on the 19th, the squadron was reported ready for active

service. On the 22d, accordingly, General Dearborn caused a body of 1700 men to be embarked, and on the 24th, owing to the impatience of the army, which suffered much by being crowded into small vessels, an attempt was made to get out. The commodore, however, agreeably to his own expectations, was obliged to return, it blowing a gale. These few days had a very injurious effect on the health of both branches of the service, as there was not sufficient room for the men to remain below, and on deck they were exposed to the inclemency of the season. The *Madison* alone, a mere sloop of war, had 600 souls in her, including her own people. On the 25th, however, the squadron, consisting of the *Madison*, Lieutenant Commandant Elliott, Commodore Chauncey; *Oneida*, Lieutenant Commandant Woolsey; *Fair American*, Lieutenant Chauncey; *Hamilton*, Lieutenant M'Pherson; Governor *Tompkins*, Lieutenant Brown; *Conquest*, Mr. Mallaby; *Asp*, Lieutenant Smith; *Pert*, Lieutenant Adams; *Julia*, Mr. Trant; *Growler*, Mr. Mix; *Ontario*, Mr. Stevens; *Scourge*, Mr. Osgood; *Lady of the Lake*, Mr. Flinn; and *Raven*, transport, got out, and it arrived off *York*, on the morning of the 25th, without loss of any sort. All the vessels ran in and anchored about a mile from the shore, to the southward and westward of the principal fort.

Great steadiness and promptitude were displayed in effecting a landing. The wind was blowing fresh from the eastward, but the boats were hoisted out, manned, and received the troops, with so much order, that in two hours from the commencement of the disembarkation, the whole brigade was on shore, under the command of Brigadier General Pike. The wind drove the boats to leeward of the place that had been selected for the landing, which was a clear field, to a point where the Indians and sharp shooters of the enemy had a cover; but the advance party was thrown ashore with great gallantry, and it soon cleared the bank and thickets, with a loss of about 40 men. This movement was covered by a rapid discharge of grape from the vessels. As soon as a sufficient number of troops had got ashore, they were formed by General Pike in person, who moved on to the assault. The small vessels now beat up, under a brisk fire from the fort and batteries, until they had got within six hundred yards of the principal work, when they opened with effect on the enemy, and contributed largely to the success of the day. The commodore directed the movements in person, pulling in his gig, and encouraging his officers by the coolness with which he moved about, under the enemy's fire. There never was a disembarkation more successful, or more spiritedly made, considering the state of the weather, and the limited means of the assailants. In effecting this service, the squadron had two midshipmen slain, and 15 men killed and wounded, mostly while employed in the boats. After sustaining some loss by an explosion that killed Brigadier General Pike, the troops so far carried the place, that it capitulated. It remained in peaceable possession of the Americans until the 1st of May, when it was evacuated to proceed on other duty.

The capture of *York* was attended with many important results,

that fully established the wisdom of the enterprise. Although the Prince Regent, the third vessel of the enemy, escaped, by having sailed on the 24th for Kingston, the Duke of Gloucester, which had been undergoing repairs, fell into the hands of the Americans. A vessel of twenty guns, that was nearly finished, was burnt, and a large amount of naval and military stores were also destroyed. A very considerable quantity of the latter, however, was saved, shipped, and sent to Sackett's Harbour. Many boats that had been built for the transportation of troops were also taken. In the entire management of this handsome exploit, the different vessels appear to have been well conducted, and they contributed largely to the complete success which crowned the enterprise.

Although the brigade re-embarked on the 1st of May, the squadron was detained at York until the 8th, by a heavy adverse gale of wind. The men were kept much on deck for more than a week, and the exposure produced many cases of fever, in both branches of the service. More than a hundred of the sailors were reported ill, and the brigade, which had lost 269 men in the attack, the wounded included, was now reduced to about 1000 effectives, by disease. As soon as the weather permitted, the commanding naval and army officers crossed in the Lady of the Lake, and selected a place for an encampment about four miles to the eastward of Fort Niagara, when the vessels immediately followed and the troops disembarked.

As soon as released from this great incumbrance on his movements, Commodore Chauncey sailed for the Harbour, with a view to obtain supplies, and to bring up reinforcements for the army. A few of the schooners remained near the head of the lake, but the greater part of the squadron went below, where it arrived on the 11th. The small vessels were now employed in conveying stores and troops to the division under General Dearborn, which was reinforcing fast by arrivals from different directions.

On the 15th of this month the enemy had advanced so far with his new ship, which was called the Wolfe, as to have got in her lower masts, and expedition became necessary, an action for the command of the lake being expected, as soon as this vessel was ready to come out. On the 16th, 100 men were sent to the upper lakes, where Captain Perry, then a young master and commander, had been ordered to assume the command, some months previously. On the 22d, the Madison, with the commodore's pennant still flying in her, embarked 350 troops, and sailed for the camp to the eastward of the mouth of the Niagara, where she arrived and disembarked the men on the 25th. The Fair American, Lieutenant Chauncey, and Pert, Acting Lieutenant Adams, were immediately ordered down to watch the movements of the enemy at Kingston, and preparations were made, without delay, for a descent on Fort George. On the 26th Commodore Chauncey reconnoitred the enemy's coast, and his position, and that night he sounded his shore, in person, laying buoys for the government of the movements of the small vessels, which it was intended to send close in. The weather being more favourable, the Madison, Oneida, and Lady of the Lake, which could be of no use

in the meditated attack, on account of their armaments, received on board all the heavy artillery of the army, and as many troops as they could carry, while the rest of the soldiers embarked in boats.

At 3 A. M., on the 27th of May, the signal was made to weigh, and the army having all previously embarked, at 4 the squadron stood towards the Niagara. As the vessels approached the point of disembarkation, the wind so far failed, as to compel the small vessels to employ their sweeps. The Growler, Mr. Mix, and Julia, Mr. Trant, swept into the mouth of the river, and opened on a battery near the lighthouse. The Ontario, Mr. Stevens, anchored more to the northward to cross their fire. The Hamilton, Lieutenant M'Pherson, the Asp, Lieutenant Smith, and the Scourge, Mr. Osgood, were directed to stand close in, to cover the landing, to scour the woods, or any point where the enemy might show himself, with grape-shot; while the Governor Tompkins, Lieutenant Brown, and Conquest, Lieutenant Pettigrew, were sent farther to the westward to attack a battery that mounted one heavy gun.

Captain Perry had come down from the upper lake on the evening of the 25th, and on this occasion was the sea-officer second in rank, present. Commodore Chauncey confided to him the duty of attending to the disembarkation of the troops. The marines of the squadron were embodied with the regiment of Colonel Macomb, and 400 seamen held in reserve, to land, if necessary, under the immediate orders of the commodore in person.

When all was ready, the schooners swept into their stations, in the handsomest manner, opening their fire with effect. The boats that contained the advance party, under Colonel Scott, were soon in motion, taking a direction towards the battery near Two Mile Creek, against which the Governor Tompkins and Conquest had been ordered to proceed. The admirable manner in which the first of these two little vessels was conducted, drew the applause of all who witnessed it, on Mr. Brown and his people. This officer swept into his station, under fire, in the steadiest manner, anchored, furling his sails, cleared his decks, and prepared to engage, with as much coolness and method, as if coming to in a friendly port. He then opened with his long gun, with a precision that, in about ten minutes, literally drove the enemy from the battery, leaving the place to his dead. The boats dashed in, under Captain Perry, and Colonel Scott effected a landing with the steadiness and gallantry for which that officer is so distinguished. The enemy had concealed a strong party in a ravine, and he advanced to repel the boats, but the grape and the cannister of the schooners, and the steady conduct of the troops, soon drove him back. The moment the command of Colonel Scott got ashore, the success of the day was assured. He was sustained by the remainder of the brigade to which he belonged then commanded by Brigadier General Boyd, and after a short but sharp conflict, the enemy was driven from the field. The landing was made about 9 A. M., and by 12 M. the town and fort were in quiet possession of the Americans, the British blowing up and evacuating the latter, and retreating towards Queenston.

In this handsome affair, in which the duty of the vessels was performed with coolness and method, the navy had but one man killed and two wounded. So spirited indeed, was the manner in which the whole duty was conducted, that the assailants generally suffered much less than the assailed, a circumstance that is, in a great measure, to be ascribed to the good conduct of the covering vessels. General Dearborn reported his loss, on this occasion, at only 17 killed and 45 wounded, while he puts that of the enemy at 90 killed, and 160 wounded, most of whom were regular troops. One hundred prisoners were also made.

Both the commanding general, and the commanding sea-officer, spoke in the highest terms of the conduct of the naval force employed in the descent on Fort George. General Dearborn admitted the extent of his obligations to Commodore Chauncey for the excellent dispositions he had made for landing the troops, always a service of delicacy and hazard, and his judicious arrangements for silencing the batteries, under the fire of which it was necessary to approach the shore. The trifling amount of the loss, is the best evidence how much these thanks were merited. Commodore Chauncey himself commended all under his orders, though he felt it due to their especial services, particularly to mention Captain Perry, and Lieutenant M'Pherson. Lieutenant Brown, of the Governor Tompkins, was signally distinguished, though his name, from some accident, was omitted in the despatches.

The occupation of Fort George brought with it an evacuation by the British of the whole Niagara frontier. Lieutenant Colonel Preston took possession of Fort Erie on the evening of the 28th, and the entire river, for the moment, was left at the command of the Americans. By this success, the squadron obtained the temporary use of another port, Commodore Chauncey running into the Niagara and anchoring, on the afternoon of the 27th. Captain Perry was immediately despatched above the falls, with a small party of seamen, to carry up five vessels that had been purchased, or captured, and which it had not been practicable, hitherto, to get past the enemy's batteries. This duty was performed during the first days of June, though not without infinite labour, as it was found necessary to track the different vessels by the aid of oxen, every inch of the way, against the strong current of the Niagara, a party of soldiers lending their assistance. By the close of the month, that zealous officer had got them all across the lake to Presque Isle, where the two brigs, laid down early in the spring, had been launched in the course of May, though their equipment proceeded very slowly, from the state of the roads and a want of men.

CHAPTER XIX.

The enemy effect a landing on Horse Island—Under Sir George Prevost, they attack Sackett's Harbour—and are repulsed, with loss—Launch of the *General Pike*—Promotions in the navy—Captures by the enemy on Lake Champlain—Depredations at Plattsburgh—Capture of the *Lady Murray*, with military stores—Movements of the enemy on Lake Ontario—The American squadron makes a second attack on York—Ineffectual attempts to meet the enemy—Loss of the *Hamilton* and *Scourge* in a squall—Capture of the *Growler* and *Julia*—Notice of Mr. Trant.

WHILE these important movements were in the course of execution near the western end of the lake, others of equal magnitude were attempted near its eastern. The descent on Fort George took place on the 27th of May, and almost at the same moment, Sir George Prevost, the British Commander-in-chief and Commodore Sir J. L. Yeo, meditated a *coup de main* against Sackett's Harbour, in revenge for the blow they had received at York. By destroying the new ship, Commodore Yeo would most probably secure a superiority on the lake for the remainder of the season, the Americans having no cruising vessel but the *Madison*, fit to lie against the *Wolfe* or *Royal George*.

On the morning of the 28th of May, the *Wolfe*, *Royal George*, *Moir*, *Prince Regent*, *Simcoe*, and *Seneca*, with two gun-boats, and a strong brigade of barges and flat-bottomed boats, appeared off Sackett's Harbour. When about two leagues from the shore, a considerable party of troops was placed in the boats, and the whole squadron bore up, with a view to land; but their attention was diverted by the appearance to the westward of a brigade containing nineteen boats, which were transporting troops to the Harbour. The enemy immediately sent his own barges in pursuit, and succeeded in driving twelve boats on shore, and in capturing them, though not until they had been abandoned by the Americans. The remaining seven got into the Harbour. Hoping to intercept another party, the enemy now hauled to the westward, and sent his boats ahead to lie in wait, and the intention to disembark that afternoon was abandoned.

As the day dawned, on the morning of the 29th, a strong division of barges, filled with troops, and covered by the two gun-boats, was seen advancing upon Horse Island, a peninsula at a short distance from the village of Sackett's Harbour. A body of about 800 men effected a landing, accompanied by Sir George Prevost in person, and an irregular and desultory, but spirited engagement took place. At first, the enemy drove all before him, and he advanced quite near the town, but being met by a detachment of regulars, he was driven back with loss, and compelled to abandon his enterprise.

In this affair, had the enemy's vessels done as good service as the American vessels performed near the Niagara, the result might have been different; but, though some of them swept up pretty near the shore, they were of no assistance to the troops. Unfortunately false

information was given to the sea-officer in charge of the store-houses, and he set fire to them, by which mistake, not only most of the stores taken at York, but many that had come from the sea-board were consumed. But for this accident, the enemy would have had no consolation for his defeat.

Information reached Commodore Chauncey on the 30th of May, that the enemy was out, and he immediately got under way from the Niagara, looked into York, then ran off Kingston, but falling in with nothing, he crossed to the Harbour, where he anchored; being satisfied that the English squadron had returned to port.

Every exertion was now made to get the new ship afloat, Commodore Chauncey rightly thinking he should not be justified in venturing an action with his present force. Although he had fourteen sail of vessels, which mounted altogether 82 guns, but two had quarters, or were at all suited to close action. As both the Madison and Oneida had been constructed for a very light draught of water, neither was weatherly, though the former acquitted herself respectably; but the latter was dull on all tacks, and what might not have been expected from her construction, particularly so before the wind. The schooners were borne down with metal, and could be of no great service except at long shot. On the other hand, all the enemy's vessels had quarters, most of them drew more water, relatively, and held a better wind than the Americans, and as a whole they were believed to mount about the same number of guns. In the way of metal the English large ships were decidedly superior to the two largest American vessels, mounting some sixty-eight-pound carronades among their other guns.

The keel of the new ship had been laid on the 9th of April, and she was got into the water June 12th, notwithstanding Mr. Eckford had been compelled to take off his carpenters to make some alterations on the vessels in the Niagara. This ship was a large corvette, and was pierced for 26 guns, long twenty-fours, and she mounted two more on circles; one on a topgallant forecastle, and the other on the poop. The day before the launch, Captain Sinclair arrived and was appointed to this vessel, which was called the General Pike. Lieutenant Trenchard, who arrived at the same time, received the command of the Madison. About this time a considerable promotion occurred in the navy, by means of which, Captain Sinclair was posted. Mr. Woolsey, Mr. Trenchard, and Mr. Elliott, all of whom served on the lakes, were raised to the rank of masters and commanders, though several weeks elapsed before the commissions were received. Messrs. Holdup, Dudley, Packett, Yarnall, Wragg, Adams, Pearce, Edwards, Jones, Conklin, and Smith, gentlemen who had also been detached for this service, and most of whom had been acting, were regularly raised to the rank of lieutenants. It was, however, a just cause of complaint, with all the commanders on the different lakes, that so few officers of experience were sent to serve under them. Most of the gentlemen just named had been to sea but four or five years, and they were generally as young in years as they were in experience. That they subsequently acquitted them-

selves well, is owing to the high tone of the service to which they belonged.

Although the Pike was so near completion, there were neither officers nor men for her, on the station; and the canvass intended for her sails had been principally burned during the late attack on the Harbour. At this time, moreover, while the service pressed, but 120 men had been sent on lake Erie, Commodore Chauncey having entertained hopes of being able to reinforce that station from below, after defeating the enemy.

On Lake Champlain two cutters, or sloops, named the Eagle and the Growler were equipped early in the war, and were first placed under the orders of Lieutenant Sidney Smith. Before the close of the season, however, Lieutenant Thomas M'Donough, an officer already well known to the service for his spirit and experience, and who fought side by side with Decatur, in all that officer's brilliant achievements, before Tripoli, was sent up to assume the command. This was so late in the year, however, as to prevent much active service before the vessels were obliged to go into winter quarters.

In the course of the winter of 1812-13, another sloop, named the President, was transferred from the transport service of the army, to the navy. Thus reinforced, M'Donough took the lake early in the spring, commanding the President in person, and having the Growler, Lieutenant Smith, and Eagle, Mr. Loomis, in company. Returning to Burlington in May of this year, from some service up the lake, Captain M'Donough learned that a small British vessel, mounting one gun, had ascended as high as Plattsburg, on the other shore, committing depredations as she proceeded. In consequence of this intelligence, the Growler and Eagle, under Lieutenant Smith, were immediately ordered down as low as Champlain, in order to close the passage against any more such excursions.

The two sloops reached their station on the evening of the 2d June. It blowing a good southerly breeze next morning, Lieutenant Smith got under way at 3, and stood down into the narrow waters, in the expectation of finding some of the enemy's row galleys at Ash Island. Disappointed in this, the Growler continued to lead down the lake, until she came in sight of the works on Isle aux Noix, about seven o'clock. The Growler now tacked, and began to beat back towards the open lake, having the wind from the same quarter, but light. There was also an adverse current so near the outlet of the lake.

As soon as the enemy was aware of the advantage of these circumstances, three of their row galleys came out from under the works, and opened their fire, each galley carrying a long 24. The guns of the two American vessels were so light as to give the heavy metal of the galleys, a great superiority, it being impossible to come to close quarters without running within the range of the fire of the batteries. To render the situation of the sloops still more critical, the troops of the enemy now lined the woods on each side of the lake, and opened on the sloops with musketry. This fire was returned with constant

discharges of grape and cannister, by Americans, and it was thought with some effect on the soldiery.

In this manner the combat continued for several hours, until half past 12, a heavy shot from the galleys struck the *Eagle* under her starboard quarter, and passed out on the other side, ripping off a whole plank under water. The sloop went down almost immediately. Fortunately the water was so shoal, where she was at the moment, that her bulwarks remained on one side, above water, and the wounded were got on them, and remained in safety until taken off by boats sent from the enemy. Soon after this accident occurred to the *Eagle*, the *Growler* had her fore-stay and main-boom shot away, when she became unmanageable, and ran ashore. Of course, this vessel was also compelled to strike.

Although Lieutenant Smith made a great mistake in trusting two vessels of that force, in so narrow a passage, with a foul wind and a current against his retreat, his defence was gallant, and highly creditable to the service. The *Growler* had 1 killed and 8 wounded, and the *Eagle* 11 wounded, Mr. Graves, the pilot, severely.

In consequence of this loss, the two vessels mentioned were transferred from the American to the British flotilla, and in August they appeared off Burlington, accompanied by three gun-boats, and several batteaux; the *President*, Captain M'Donough then lying there, but unable to go out, as this vessel now constituted the whole American force. The enemy destroyed some stores, and captured several small trading craft that fell in with his way. He also threw a few shot into the town. This expedition was commanded by Captain Everard.

The Americans now commenced building, and purchasing, as on the other lakes, and by the end of the season had made some progress towards attaining a force likely to secure to them, again, the command of the lake.

In the mean time, the efforts on Ontario continued. One of the small vessels was constantly kept cruising between the Ducks and Kingston, to watch the enemy, it being known that he was now much superior in force. Early in June, the British squadron went up the lake, most probably to transport troops, quitting port in the night; but Commodore Chauncey very properly decided that the important interests confided to his discretion required that he should not follow it, until he was reinforced by the accession of the *Pike*, to get which vessel ready, every possible exertion was making.

On the 14th of June, the *Lady of the Lake*, Lieutenant W. Chauncey, left the harbour to cruise off *Presque Isle*, to intercept the stores of the enemy; and on the 16th, she captured the schooner *Lady Murray*, loaded with provisions, shot, and fixed ammunition. This vessel was in charge of an ensign and 15 men, the prisoners amounting, in all, to twenty-one. Mr. Chauncey carried his prize into the harbour on the 18th, passing quite near the enemy's squadron. The prisoners reported the launch of a new brig at Kingston.

About this time, the enemy's squadron, consisting of the *Wolfe*, *Royal George*, *Moir*, *Melville*, *Berresford*, *Sidney Smith*, and one

or two gun-boats, appeared off Oswego. Preparations were made to disembark a party of troops, but the weather becoming threatening, Sir James Yeo was induced to defer the descent, and stood to the westward. He then went off the Genesee, where some provisions were seized and carried away, and a descent was made at Great Sodus, with a similar object, but which failed, though several buildings were burned, and some flour was captured. Shortly before, he had appeared off the coast, to the westward of the Niagara, seizing some boats belonging to the army, loaded with stores. Two vessels, similarly employed, were also captured.

On the 23d of June, 14 of the guns, and a quantity of the rigging for the Pike, reached the harbour; and the next day, Commodore Chauncey advised the government to commence building a large fast-sailing schooner. This recommendation was followed, and the keel of a vessel that was subsequently called the Sylph, was soon after laid, her size being determined by the nature of the materials necessary for her equipment, which were principally on the spot.

It was the last of June before the people began to arrive for the Pike; the first draft, consisting of only 35 men, reaching the harbour on the 29th of that month. These were followed, on the 1st of July, by 94 more, from Boston. It was thought, by the assistance of the army, that the ship might be got out, with the aid of these men. In estimating the embarrassments of the lake service, in general, the reluctance of the sailors of the country to serve on those waters should not be overlooked. The stations were known to be sickly, the service was exceedingly arduous, several winter months were to be passed, under a rigorous climate, in harbours that had none of the ordinary attractions of a seaport, and the chances for prize-money were too insignificant to enter into the account. At this period in the history of the navy, the men were entered for particular ships, and not for the general service, as at present; and it would have been nearly impossible to procure able seamen for this unpopular duty, had not the means been found to induce parts of crews to follow their officers from the Atlantic coast, as volunteers. A considerable party had been sent from the Constitution, to Lake Ontario, after her return from the coast of Brazil, and the arrival of a portion of the crew of the John Adams, on Lake Erie, has already been mentioned. On the 8th of July, Captain Crane arrived from the same ship; and two days later, he was followed by all the officers and men of that vessel, for which a new crew had been enlisted. This timely reinforcement was assigned, in a body, to the Madison, that ship being nearly of the size and force of the vessel from which they came.

On the afternoon of the 1st of July, however, or previously to this important accession to his force, a deserter came in and reported that Sir James Yeo had left Kingston the previous night, in 20 large boats, with a body of 800 or 1000 men, with which he had crossed and landed in Chaumont Bay, about seven miles from the Harbour. Here he had encamped in the woods, concealing his boats with the branches of trees, with an intention to make an attack on the American squadron, in the course of the approaching night. Preparations

were accordingly made to receive the expected assault, but the enemy did not appear. On the following morning, Commodore Chauncey went out with the vessels that were ready, and examined the shore, but the enemy could not be found. At sunset he returned, and moored the vessels in readiness for the attack. Still no enemy appeared. That night and the succeeding day, five more deserters came in, all corroborating each other's account, by which it would seem that the expedition was abandoned on the night of the 1st, in consequence of the desertion of the man who had first come in. At this time, the Pike had 16 of her guns mounted; and there is little doubt that Commodore Yeo would have been defeated, had he persisted in his original intention. By July 3d, the remainder of her armament had reached the harbour.

Soon after, Commodore Chauncey felt himself strong enough to despatch 130 men, with the necessary officers, to the upper lakes; and permission was given to Captain Perry to commence his operations against the enemy, as soon as that officer should deem it prudent. Still a proportion of the men present, that varied from a tenth to a fifth of their whole number, was reported on the sick list; among whom were Captain Sinclair, of the Pike, all the lieutenants of that ship but one, and 60 of her people.

On the 21st of July, the *Madison*, Captain Crane, went off Kingston, communicating with the commodore by signal, who remained at anchor in the Pike, which ship was getting ready as fast as possible. The same evening the latter went out, accompanied by the squadron, running over to the north shore, and then steered to the westward. The winds were light, and the vessels did not arrive off the mouth of the Niagara, until the 27th. Here a small body of troops was embarked under Colonel Scott, and the squadron proceeded to the head of the lake, with a view to make a descent at Burlington Bay. After landing the troops and marines, and reconnoitering, Colonel Scott believed the enemy to be too strong, and too well posted, for the force under his command; and on the 30th, the vessels weighed and ran down to York. Here Colonel Scott landed without opposition, and got possession of the place. A considerable quantity of provisions, particularly flour, was seized, five pieces of cannon were found, some shot and powder were brought off, and 11 boats, built to transport troops, were destroyed. Some barracks, and other public buildings, were burned. The troops re-embarked on the 1st of August, and on the 3d they were disembarked again, in the Niagara. The next day, Lieutenant Elliott, with Messrs. Smith and Conklin, eight midshipmen, and 100 men, were landed and sent up to Lake Erie, to report themselves to Captain Perry. This draft greatly deranged the crew of the Pike, her men requiring to be stationed anew, after it had been made.

At daylight, on the morning of the 7th, while at anchor off the mouth of the Niagara, the enemy's squadron, consisting of two ships, two brigs, and two large schooners, were seen to the northwest, and to windward, distant about six miles. The American vessels immediately weighed, and endeavoured to obtain the weather gage, the

construction of a large portion of the force rendering this advantage important in a general action. At this time, Commodore Chauncey had present the *Pike*, *Madison*, *Oneida*, *Hamilton*, *Scourge*, *Ontario*, *Fair American*, *Governor Tompkins*, *Conquest*, *Julia*, *Growler*, *Asp*, and *Pert*, or thirteen sail. Of this force, the three vessels first named, were all that had been regularly constructed for the purpose of war. The rest had no quarters, as has been already mentioned, mounting one or two guns on circles, and, in a few instances, five or six others in broadside. The schooners could scarcely have been fought with prudence, within reach of canister, as the men were exposed from their feet upwards. On the other hand, the six vessels of the enemy had all been constructed for war, had close quarters, and their schooners had regular sea armaments. This difference in the character of the respective forces, rendered it difficult to bring on an action, as neither party would be willing to engage under circumstances that were disadvantageous to its particular species of armament. The size of the lake, which at first view might seem to render it difficult to avoid a combat, was in truth in favour of such a design; the distances being so small, that the retiring party, under ordinary circumstances, would have it in his power to gain a harbour, before its enemy could close. Both commanders, it is now understood, acted under very rigid instructions, it being known that the fortune of the northern war, in a great measure, depended on the command of this lake, and neither party was disposed to incur any undue risks of losing the chance to obtain it.

On the present occasion, however, Commodore Chauncey was anxious to bring the enemy to battle, feeling a sufficient confidence in his officers and men to believe they would render his mixed and greatly divided force sufficiently available. The principal advantage of the enemy was in the identity of character that belonged to his squadron, which enabled him to keep it in compact order, and to give it concentrated and simultaneous evolutions, while the movements of the best of the American vessels, were necessarily controlled by those of their worst. In short the manœuvring of the American squadron, throughout this entire summer, furnishes an illustration of that nautical principle to which there has elsewhere been an allusion, in an attempt to point out the vast importance of preserving an equality in the properties of ships. Indeed the *Pike* and *Madison* alone could compete with vessels of ordinary qualities, the *Oneida* proving to be so dull, that the flag-ship was frequently compelled to take her in tow.*

At 9 A. M. the *Pike*, having got abreast of the *Wolfe*, the leading vessel of the enemy, hoisted her ensign, and fired a few guns to try

* Although this brig had been regularly constructed for the navy, in the year 1808, and her dimensions made her about 240 tons, carpenter's measurement, her draught of water was not greater than that which would properly belong to a sloop of 80 tons. This was owing to a wish to enable her to enter the rivers of the south shore, nearly all of which have bars. It may be mentioned here, that the *Oneida* was salted. Mr. Woolsey, ascertaining that the schooners employed in the salt trade, between Oswego and Niagara, which were commonly built of half-seasoned timber, seldom decayed about the floors, had this brig filled with salt from her plank-sheer down, and it is understood that she was sound many years afterwards. The timber was cut in the forest, moulded, and placed in the brig's frame, within the same month.

the range of her shot. Finding that the latter fell short, she wore and hauled to the wind on the other tack, the sternmost of the small schooners being then six miles distant. The enemy wore in succession, also, and got upon the same tack as the American squadron, but ascertaining that the leading vessels of the latter would weather upon him, he soon tacked, and hauled off to the northward. As soon as the rear of the American line was far enough ahead to fetch his wake, signal was made to the squadron to tack once more, and to crowd sail in chase. The wind now gradually fell, and about sunset it was calm, the schooners using their sweeps to close. As night approached, the signal of recall was made, in order to collect the squadron, there being an apprehension that some of the small vessels might be cut off.

In the night the wind came from the westward, and it blew in squalls. All the vessels were at quarters, carrying sail to gain the wind of the enemy, with a view to engage him in the morning. Not long after midnight, a rushing sound was heard; and several of the vessels felt more or less of a squall; but the strength of the gust passed astern. Soon after it was ascertained that the Hamilton, Lieutenant Winter, and Scourge, Mr. Osgood, had disappeared. The Pike now spoke the Governor Tompkins, which informed the commodore that the missing schooners had capsized in the squall, and that the whole of their officers and men, with the exception of sixteen of the latter, had been drowned.*

The American squadron now hove to, and soon after daylight the enemy set studding-sails and stood down upon it, apparently with an intention to engage. When a little more than a league distant, however, he brought by the wind, and the signal was made from the Pike to ware, and to bring to on the same tack. After waiting some time for the English ships to come down, Commodore Chauncey edged away for the land, hoping, by getting the breeze which, at that season, usually came off the southern shore, in the afternoon, to obtain the weather gage. It fell calm, however, and the schooners were

* It has been ascertained, by means of an intelligent seaman on board the Scourge, of the name of Myers, that when the squall struck that vessel, her commander, Mr. Osgood, was below, and most of her people asleep at their guns. Myers, himself, had just risen from the deck, and was in the act of going below, when the schooner first felt the wind. As the vessel was an English prize raised upon, she had always been tender, and required the most careful watching. When she went over, Myers succeeded in passing along her weather side, until he reached the stern, where he threw himself off, and swam a few yards until he reached a boat that was towing astern. By means of this boat he not only saved himself, but several more of the crew, all of whom got on board the Julia, Mr. Trant, the nearest vessel. Others were picked up by the same boat, which was sent to look for the men.

While Myers stood on the quarter of the Scourge, he saw by a flash of lightning Mr. Osgood endeavouring to force his body through a cabin window, and that officer was probably drowned in that situation. The schooner went down, while Myers was getting into the boat. By what means the painter of the boat was cast off, Myers never knew.

The account which is given of the loss of the Scourge, in a little sketch of the life of this old salt, and nearly in the words that came from his own mouth, is one of the most interesting, simple and thrilling narratives in the English language.

Of the manner in which the Hamilton was lost, no particulars have been preserved, though four of her crew also were picked up. It is not now known what became of these four men, though three of those saved from the Scourge are yet living, viz: Edward Myers, or "Ned Myers," as he is familiarly called, as gallant old tar as ever paced a deck, Lemuel Bryant, a pensioner, and Leonard Lewis.

ordered to sweep up towards the enemy, and to bring him to action. While the latter were attempting to execute this order, the wind came out light at the eastward, when the Pike took the Oneida in tow, and stood down towards the enemy. The van of the schooners had got within two miles of the English squadron, when the breeze suddenly shifted to the westward, giving the latter the advantage of the wind. Sir James Yeo now bore up, in the expectation of cutting off the American small vessels, before the ships could cover them; but the former, by freely using their sweeps, soon got into their stations again, when the enemy hauled by the wind and hove to.

It now became squally, and the people having been at quarters nearly two days and nights, and the enemy, who was evidently indisposed to engage, unless on his own terms, possessing a great advantage in such weather, as the late accident sufficiently proved, Commodore Chauncey ran in, and anchored at the mouth of the Niagara. It blew heavy in squalls throughout the night, but the enemy being in sight to the northward, at daylight, the squadron weighed and stood out after him. Throughout the whole of this day, and of the succeeding night, under a succession of squalls, light airs, and calms, and constant changes in the direction of the winds, the American vessels were endeavouring to close with the enemy, without success. At daylight, however, on the morning of the 10th, Commodore Chauncey, having taken the precaution to get under the north shore, found himself to windward, with the enemy bearing S. W. The Pike now took the Asp, and the Madison the Fair American in tow, and the whole squadron kept away, with every prospect of forcing the English to engage. About noon, and before the squadrons were within gun-shot of each other, the wind shifted to W. S. W., giving the enemy the weather gage. Throughout the day, there was a series of unsuccessful manœuvres to close and to gain the wind, but about 5 P. M., the enemy was becalmed under the south shore, and the American squadron got a breeze from N. N. W., nearing him fast. At 6, being then distant about four miles, the line of battle was formed, though the wind had become very light. The vessels continued to close until 7, when a fresh breeze came out at S. W., placing the enemy once more to windward. After some manœuvring, the two squadrons were standing to the northward, with their larboard tacks aboard, under easy canvass, the enemy astern and to windward. It being now pretty certain that with vessels of qualities so unequal, he could not get the wind of the English, while the latter were disposed to avoid it, Commodore Chauncey adopted an order of battle that was singularly well adapted to draw them down, and which was admirable for its advantages and ingenuity. The American squadron formed in two lines, one to windward of the other. The weather line consisted altogether of the smallest of the schooners, having in it, in the order in which they are named from the van to the rear, the Julia, Growler, Pert, Asp, Ontario, and Fair American. The line to leeward contained, in the same order, the Pike, Oneida, Madison, Governor Tompkins, and Conquest. It was hoped that Sir James Yeo would close with the

weather line in the course of the night, and, with a view to bring him down, the *Julia*, *Growler*, *Pert*, and *Asp* were directed, after engaging as long as was prudent, to edge away, and to pass through the intervals left between the leading vessels of the line to leeward, forming again under their protection, while the *Ontario* and *Fair American*, were directed to run into the leeward line, and form astern of the *Conquest*. Nothing could have been simpler, or better devised, than this order of battle; nor is it possible to say what might have been the consequences had circumstances allowed the plan to be rigidly observed.

At half past 10 P. M. the enemy tacked and stood after the American squadron, keeping to windward of the weather line. At 11, the *Fair American*, the sternmost of the schooners in this line, began to fire; and the enemy continuing to draw ahead, in about fifteen minutes the action became general between him and the weather line. At half past 11 all the schooners engaged bore up, according to orders, with the exception of the two in the van, which tacked in the hope of gaining the wind of the English ships, instead of waring, or bearing up. This unfortunate departure from the order of battle, entirely changed the state of things; Sir James Yeo, instead of following the schooners down, as had been expected, keeping his wind with a view to cut off the two that had separated. Commodore Chauncey now filled, and kept away two points, in the hope of drawing the enemy from the vessels to windward, but the English exchanged a few shot with the *Pike* in passing, and continued in pursuit of the two schooners. The American squadron immediately tacked, and endeavoured to close, with the double view of covering their consorts, and of engaging.

The schooners to windward were the *Growler*, Lieutenant Deacon, and the *Julia*, Mr. Trant.* As soon as they obtained a weatherly position, they opened on the enemy with their long guns, but were soon obliged to make sail, endeavouring to escape by making short tacks. After a time, it was ascertained that they were in two fathoms' water, and on the enemy's coast. The English squadron was dead to leeward, in open order to prevent them from getting off by turning

* James Trant was a sailing-master in the navy, from the time of its formation, until the close of the war of 1812. He was an Irishman by birth, and is believed to have come to this country in 1781, with Captain Barry, in the *Alliance* 32, or in the passage in which that ship captured the *Trepassy* and *Atalanta*. At any rate, the journals of the day mention that a Mr. Trent, (the manner in which the name is pronounced,) an Irish naval volunteer, had accompanied Captain Barry on that occasion. Few persons have given rise to more traditions in the service, than Mr. Trant. His eccentricities were as conspicuous as his nautical peculiarities and his gallantry. His whole life was passed in, or about ships, and his prejudices and habits were as thoroughly naval as those of Pipes himself. For England, and Englishmen, he entertained to the last, the most unyielding hatred, which appeared to be associated, in his mind, with wrongs done to Ireland. He was usually supposed to be a man of obdurate feelings, and of a cruel disposition, but he was not without some of the finest traits of human nature. A volume might be written of his eccentricities and opinions. He had been in many actions, and was always remarkable for decision and intrepidity. His capture was owing to the latter quality. Towards the close of a life that extended to seventy years, he received the commission of a lieutenant, an honour that appeared to console him for all his hardships and dangers. He died at Philadelphia, a few years after the war, and is said to have been found with pistols under his pillow to keep off the doctors. It is also said, we know not with what truth, that he ordered his body to be carried into blue water, and to be buried in the ocean.

their wings. An opening existing in the centre, with those of three of the enemy on each side, it was gallantly attempted to pass through it, by keeping dead away. This was effectually running the gauntlet; as might have been expected, the experiment failed. The *Julia* led, and was cut up and became unmanageable, being actually run aboard and carried in that way; her commander obstinately refusing to haul his colours down. The *Growler* met with a heavier loss than the *Julia*, and being crippled, struck.

It was the opinion of Commodore Chauncey, that these schooners were lost through excess of zeal in their commanders, who thought that a general action was about to take place, and that by gaining the wind, they might be of more service, than if stationed to leeward. The result showed the necessity of complete concert in naval evolutions, and the virtue of implicit obedience.

Each of the vessels taken by the enemy, carried two guns, and had a crew of about 40 souls. Some damage was done to the sails and rigging of the enemy, by the fire of the schooners, but the American squadron, the *Julia* and *Growler* excepted, received no injury worth mentioning.

The *Pike*, after carrying sail hard for some time, finding that she was separating from the rest of the squadron, and that there was no hope of saving the two schooners, rejoined the other vessels, and formed the line again. At daylight, the enemy was seen a long way to windward, it blowing fresh. The small vessels beginning to labour excessively, it became necessary to send two of the dullest of them into *Niagara* for security.

The gale continuing, the commodore now determined to run for the *Genesee*, with the rest of the vessels, but the wind increasing, and the *Madison* and *Oneida* not having a day's provisions on board, he stood for the harbour, where he did not arrive until the 13th, the wind failing before he got in.

It was very evident from the operations of this arduous week, the enemy intended to avoid an action, unless it could be brought on under circumstances altogether favourable to himself. Although the *Pike* most probably outsailed any thing on the lake, and the *Madison* was nearly, if not quite on an equality with the enemy's best vessels, these two ships were unequal to engaging the British squadron alone, and the remainder of the American vessels did not deserve to be included in the class of cruisers at all. As a squadron, the English force was much faster than the American force, furnishing a complete example of the manner in which the best ships of a fleet are necessarily reduced, in a trial of qualities, to the level of the worst. The English were so much aware of the truth of this principle, that they declined putting the prizes into their squadron, but after disarming them they converted them into transports.

It is now understood that the species of warfare that Sir James Yeo adopted, was cautiously enjoined by his instructions, it being very evident that even a protracted struggle was better than positive defeat, in the peculiar situation of the *Canadas*.

CHAPTER XX.

Meeting and fruitless manœuvring of the hostile squadrons—Launch of the *Sylph* at Sackett's Harbour—Changes and promotions—Unavailing cruise of six days—Escape of the enemy in a running fight—Action on the Lake—Chase—The American squadron haul off for the Niagara—Capture of six British transports—Review of the operations.

THE enemy was still building, though his extreme vigilance, and a practice of changing the names of his vessels, rendered it exceedingly difficult to obtain accurate information of the state of his fleet. A fine large schooner, superior in size and model to the *Oneida*, had also been laid down at the Harbour, some time previously, and was now nearly ready for launching.

The sickness among the people of the American squadron continued, the *Madison* in particular, having more than a third of her crew on the doctor's list, when she sailed on her next cruise. As more than 150 men had been taken from the squadron, by the loss of the four schooners, and so many were unable to do duty, Commodore Chauncey on his return to the Harbour, having fallen in with the *Lady of the Lake*, carrying a party of 50 marines up to Niagara, who were to join Captain Perry on the upper lakes, had taken them out for his own vessels, a measure that compelled the latter officer to obtain volunteers from the army.

Without waiting for the new vessel, however, Commodore Chauncey took in provisions for five weeks, and sailed on another cruise the very day of his arrival. On the 16th, the squadron was off the Niagara, and the same day the enemy was made, being eight sail in all. Some manœuvring to obtain the wind followed, but it coming on to blow, the vessels ran into the mouth of the Genesee, and anchored. This was another of the evil consequences of having vessels like the small schooners in the squadron, a sea little heavier than common causing them to labour to a degree that rendered it unsafe to keep the lake. The wind, however, freshened so much as to compel the whole squadron to weigh and bear up, forcing them down the lake under easy canvass. The enemy, it would seem, was also driven to leeward, for he was seen at anchor under the False Ducks, as those islands came in sight. The *Fair American* and *Asp* having been sent into the Niagara on duty, the vessels present in the American squadron, on this occasion, were the *Pike*, *Madison*, *Oneida*, *Tompkins*, *Conquest*, *Ontario*, *Pert*, and *Lady of the Lake*; the latter having no armament fit for a general engagement. It was now expected that the enemy would be willing to engage, and the vessels were cleared for action. The wind again shifted, however, bringing the English squadron to windward; but by carrying sail hard, the American vessels were weathering on the enemy when the latter ran behind the islands, and was believed to have stood into Kingston. The gale increasing, and the schooners being actually in

danger of foundering, Commodore Chauncey bore up for the Harbour, where he arrived on the 19th of the month.

The new vessel had been launched on the 18th, and she was immediately rigged and named the *Sylph*. Her armament was peculiar, for, in that comparative wilderness, the materials that could be had were frequently taken, in the place of those that were desired. Four long thirty-twos were mounted on circles between her masts, and six sixes were placed in broadside. As this vessel was expected to be weatherly, it was hoped these heavy guns might cut away some of the enemy's spars, and bring on a general action. It is due to the extraordinary capacity of the builder, to say that this schooner was put into the water in twenty-one working days after her keel had been laid.

The commissions of the officers promoted a short time previously, were now found at the Harbour, and Lieutenant Commandant Woolsey was transferred to the *Sylph*, with his new rank; Lieutenant Thomas Brown, the officer who had so much distinguished himself at the landing before Fort George, succeeded him in the *Oneida*. The commission of master and commander was also sent after Mr. Elliott, to Lake Erie, that gentleman having been promoted over many other lieutenants, as a reward for the capture of the two brigs, the previous autumn. Captain Trenchard left the station on account of ill health. About this time, too, Captain Perry made an application to be relieved from his command on the upper lakes, complaining of the quality of the crews of the vessels he commanded. It ought, indeed to be mentioned that there was a general want of men on all the lakes, on account of the dislike of the Atlantic sailors to the service, and the fact that nearly all who came upon those waters from the sea-board, had to undergo a seasoning through disease. It appears by the official reports made about this time, that nearly one man in six, were left on shore, in consequence of illness. At one time, this season, the *Madison* had 80 men, in a complement of about 200, on the sick list, or nearly half her people.

On the 28th of August, Commodore Chauncey sailed again, with the *Pike*, *Madison*, *Sylph*, *Oneida*, *Tompkins*, *Conquest*, *Ontario*, *Pert*, and *Lady of the Lake*; nine sail in all, of which four had been built for cruisers, though the *Sylph* was unsuited to close action; four were the merchant schooners so often mentioned, and the last a look-out vessel.

The enemy was not seen until the 7th of September, when the squadron lying at anchor in, and off, the *Niagara*, his ships were made out at daylight, close in and to leeward. The signal to weigh was instantly shown, and the *Pike*, *Madison*, and *Sylph*, each taking a schooner in tow, sail was made in chase. The enemy bore up to the northward, and for six days the American squadron followed the English, endeavouring to bring it to action, without success. On the 11th of September, the enemy was becalmed off the *Genesee*, when the American vessels got a breeze and ran within gun-shot, before the English squadron took the wind. A running fight, that lasted more than three hours, was the result; but the enemy escaped

in consequence of his better sailing, it being out of the power of the American commander to close with more than two of his vessels, the Sylph being totally unfitted for that species of combat. As the Pike succeeded in getting several broadsides at the enemy, he did not escape without being a good deal cut up, having, according to his own report, an officer and ten men killed and wounded. The Pike was hulled a few times, and other trifling injuries were received, though no person was hurt. Previously to this affair, Commodore Chauncey had been joined by the Fair American and Asp. On the 12th, Sir James Yeo ran into Amherst Bay, where the Americans were unable to follow him, on account of their ignorance of the shoals. It was supposed that the English commodore declined engaging on this occasion, in consequence of the smoothness of the water, it being his policy to bring his enemy to action in blowing weather, when the American schooners would be nearly useless.

Commodore Chauncey remained off the Ducks until the 17th, when the English squadron succeeded in getting into Kingston, after which he went into port for despatches and supplies. The next day, however, he came out again, and on the 19th, the enemy was seen in the vicinity of the Ducks. No notice was now taken of him, but the squadron stood up the lake, in the hope that the English would follow, and also with a view of bringing down a brigade of troops, a division of the army being about to concentrate at Sackett's Harbour, preparatory to descending the St. Lawrence with a view to attack Kingston or Montreal.

In a day or two, the squadron got off the Niagara, and anchored. Here a rumour reached it, that there had been a general and decisive action, between the English and American forces on the upper lakes. On the 26th of September, information was received that Sir James Yeo was at York, with all his squadron. The Lady of the Lake was sent across to ascertain the fact, on the morning of the 27th, and returning the same evening with a confirmation of the report, the squadron instantly got under way. Owing to the wind, the darkness of the night, and the bad sailing of so many of the vessels, the squadron was not got into line, until 8 A. M., on the morning of the 28th, when the Pike, Madison, and Sylph, each took a schooner in tow, as usual, and sail was made for the north shore.

The English squadron was soon discovered under canvass, in York Bay, and the American vessels immediately edged away for it. Fortunately, the Americans had the weather gage, the wind being at the eastward, blowing a good breeze. As soon as the enemy perceived the American ships approaching, he tacked and stretched out into the lake, in order to get room to manœuvre; Commodore Chauncey forming his line, and steering directly for his centre. When the American squadron was about a league distant, the English ships made all sail, on a wind, to the southward. The former now wore in succession, to get on the same tack with the enemy; and as soon as this object was effected, it began to edge away again in order to close.

The enemy now had no alternative between putting up his helm,

and running off before the wind, thus satisfactorily demonstrating which party sought, and which avoided a general action, or in allowing the Americans to commence the engagement. Notwithstanding the wariness with which Sir James Yeo had hitherto manœuvred to prevent a decisive combat, he had always maintained the pretension of seeking a conflict, probably with a view to encourage the colonies, and a retreat, at this moment, would have been too unequivocally a flight to admit of palliation. The American squadron was a good deal extended, in consequence of the great difference in the sailing of its vessels, the Pike being considerably ahead of most of her consorts. As the signal was flying for close action, the Governor Tompkins had passed several of the larger vessels, and was next astern of the commodore, while the Madison, which had one of the heaviest of the schooners in tow, was prevented from getting as near as was desirable. The *Oncida*, too, now showed her worst qualities, no exertions of her gallant commander, Lieutenant Commandant Brown, being able to urge her into the conflict. In this state of things, Sir James Yeo, perceiving that his two sternmost vessels were in danger, and that there was some little chance of cutting off the rear of the American line, which was a good deal extended, determined to tack, and to hazard an engagement.

At ten minutes past meridian, accordingly, the English ships began to tack in succession, while the Pike made a yaw to leeward, edging away rapidly, to get nearer to the enemy's centre. As soon as the two or three leading vessels of the enemy, among which were the *Wolfe* and *Royal George*, got round, they opened on the Pike, which ship received their fire for several minutes without returning it. When near enough, she opened in her turn. The Pike on this occasion, was not only beautifully handled, but her fire was probably as severe as ever came out of a broadside of a ship of her force. For twenty minutes she lay opposed to all the heaviest vessels of the enemy, receiving little or no support from any of her own squadron, with the exception of the *Asp*, the schooner she had in tow, and the Governor Tompkins. The latter vessel, commanded for the occasion by Lieutenant W. C. B. Finch,* of the *Madison*, was handled with a gallantry that reflected high credit on that young officer, steadily keeping the station into which she had been so spiritedly carried, and maintaining a warm fire until crippled by the enemy, and unavoidably left astern. When the smoke blew away, during a pause in this sharp combat, it was found that the *Wolfe* had lost her main and mizen topmast and her main-yard, besides receiving other injuries. Cut up so seriously, she put away dead before the wind, crowding all the canvass she could carry on her forward spars. At this moment, the *Royal George* luffed up in noble style, across her stern, to cover the English commodore, who ran off to leeward, passing through his own line, in order to effect his retreat. There is no question that this timely and judicious movement of Sir James Yeo saved his squadron, for had he remained long enough to permit

*Since Captain W. C. Bolton

the Madison and Oneida to use their carronades, his whole force would have been sacrificed.

The enemy bore up a few minutes before 1 P. M., and the Pike immediately made a signal for a general chase. As the enemy went off to leeward, the Royal George kept yawing athwart the English commodore's stern and delivering her broadsides in a manner to extort exclamations of delight from the American fleet. She was commanded by Captain Mulcaster, an officer who won the perfect esteem of his enemies, by his gallantry and good conduct on this occasion.

When the English squadron bore up, the American vessels followed, maintaining a heavy fire with as many of their circle and chase guns as could reach the enemy. It was now found that the armament of the Sylph was not suited to service, the guns between her masts being so crowded as not to allow of their being used with freedom, or rapidity, more especially when in chase. This circumstance, notwithstanding her size and sailing, rendered her scarcely of more use than one of the smaller schooners.

After pursuing the enemy about two hours, during which time the squadron had run nearly up to the head of the lake, where the former had a post at Burlington Bay, and finding that the English ships outsailed most of his vessels, Commodore Chauncey made the signal to haul off with a view to stand in for the Niagara. As the enemy was effectually beaten, and there is scarcely a doubt, would have been destroyed, had he been pressed, this order has been much criticised, as uncalled for, and unfortunate. The motives which influenced the American commander, however, were marked by that discretion and thoughtfulness, which are among the highest attributes of an officer, and which distinguished his whole career, while entrusted with the arduous and responsible service over which he presided during the war.

The wind was increasing, and it shortly after came on to blow an easterly gale, and an action, under such circumstances, would probably have caused both squadrons to have been thrown ashore, there being nothing but a roadsted, under Burlington heights, which the wind that then blew swept. As the enemy was known to have a considerable land force at this point, all who were driven ashore, would necessarily have fallen into his hands; and had he succeeded in getting off one or two of the smaller vessels, he would effectually have obtained the command of the lake. By going in to the Niagara, on the other hand, the American squadron was in a position to intercept the retreat of the enemy, who was in a *cul de sac*, and after waiting for more moderate weather, he might be attacked even at anchor, should it be deemed expedient, under much more favourable circumstances. In addition to these reasons, which were weighty, and worthy of a commander of reflection and judgment, the Pike had received a shot or two beneath her water line, which required that her pumps should be kept going, a toil, that united to the labour of an action, would have finally exhausted the strength of the ship's company. The enemy had batteries to command the anchorage,

too, and no doubt he would have established more, had the Americans gone in.

The gale continued until the evening of the 31st, the wind standing to the eastward even several days longer. During this time, Commodore Chauncey communicated with the commanding general at Niagara, who deemed it more important that he should watch Sir James Yeo, than that he should accompany the transports down the lake. As this opinion coincided with that of the commanding naval officer himself, the troops were embarked and sent off as fast as the transports could be got ready, while the squadron held itself in reserve, to intercept the enemy, as soon as he should attempt to come to the westward.

In the action of the 28th of September, the Pike suffered a good deal, both in her hull and aloft, bearing the weight of the enemy's fire for most of the time. Her main-topgallant mast was shot away early in the engagement, and her bowsprit, foremast, and mainmast were all wounded. Her rigging and sails were much cut up, and she had been repeatedly hulled; two or three times below the water line, as already stated. Five of her men, only, were killed and wounded by shot. While bearing up in chase, however, the starboard bow gun bursted, by which accident twenty-two men were either slain, or seriously injured. The topgallant forecastle was torn up by this explosion, rendering its circle gun useless during the remainder of the day. Four of the other guns also cracked in the muzzles, producing great distrust about using them. The Madison received some slight injuries, and the Oneida had her main-topmast badly wounded. But no person was hurt in either of these vessels. The Governor Tompkins lost her foremast. On the part of the enemy, the Wolfe and Royal George suffered most; and it is believed that the former vessel sustained a very heavy loss in men. It is also understood, that one, if not two, of the enemy's smallest vessels struck, but the Pike declining to take possession, in the eagerness to close with the Wolfe, they eventually escaped.

On the 2d, the wind coming round light to the westward, and the last transport having been sent down the lake with troops, the squadron weighed, and stretched out to look for the enemy. At 10 A. M. he was seen standing down, under studding sails. The instant the American vessels were made, however, the enemy came by the wind and carried sail to keep off. During the remainder of this day, the English ships gained on the American, and at daylight on the 3d they were seen at anchor, close in under an island between Twelve and Twenty Mile Creeks. It blew quite heavily in gusts throughout the day, both squadrons turning to windward, the enemy being nearly up with the head of the lake at sunset. The night proved dark and squally, with a good deal of rain, and every precaution was taken to prevent the enemy from getting past, as he was now caught, as it might be, in a net.

The next morning the weather was thick, and nothing could be seen of the English squadron. It falling calm at noon, the Lady of the Lake was ordered to the westward, to sweep up to ascertain its

position, or whether it had not anchored again in Burlington Bay. At 9 P. M. that schooner returned, and reported that the English squadron was not to be seen, only two gun-boats being visible. As a discreet and experienced officer had been sent on this service, Commodore Chauncey immediately inferred that the enemy had got past him, during the darkness of the preceding night, and that he had gone down the lake, either to cut off the American transports, or to get into Kingston. Sail was immediately made to run off the Ducks, with a view to intercept Sir James Yeo, or any prizes he might have taken. It is now known that the officers of the *Lady of the Lake* were deceived, the British fleet actually lying at anchor so close under the heights that their hulls and spars were confounded with objects on the shore; the gentleman sent to ascertain the fact being too eager to report the supposed escape of the enemy, to go near enough in to make certain of the truth. There is little question that this unfortunate mistake alone saved the British squadron from a signal defeat; the result of the action of the 28th, and a knowledge of recent events on Lake Erie, having raised such a feeling among the American vessels, as would almost insure a victory, and the end of the lake being now a weather shore, an attack at anchor would have been perfectly safe.

That night and the succeeding day the American squadron made a great run, the wind blowing heavily from the N. W. At 3 P. M., on the 5th, seven sail were seen ahead, near the False Ducks, and no doubts were entertained that they were the British squadron. All sail was carried to close, but at 4 the chases were made out to be schooners and sloops. Signals were now shown for the *Sylph* and *Lady of the Lake* to cast off their tows, and to chase to the N. E. This induced the strangers to separate, when the *Pike* cast off the *Governor Tompkins*, and passed ahead also. The strangers now set fire to one of their vessels, the other six crowding sail to escape. At sunset, when opposite the Real Ducks, the British vessels the *Confiance*, *Hamilton*, and *Mary*, struck to the *Pike*. The *Sylph* soon after joined, bringing down with her another prize, the *Drummond* cutter, and early next morning the same schooner brought out of the Ducks the *Lady Gore*. The *Enterprise*, the seventh vessel, escaped.

The prizes were gun-vessels, carrying from one to three guns each, and were employed as transports; a part of one of the foreign regiments in the British service being on board at the time. The whole number of prisoners made amounted to 264, including officers. Among the latter were a lieutenant and two master's mates of the British Royal Navy, and four masters of the provincial marine. Ten officers of the army were also taken. The *Confiance* and *Hamilton*, two of the prizes, were the schooners *Growler* and *Julia*, taken on the night of the 8th of August, which, the enemy had rightly judged, would prove an incumbrance rather than an accession to their squadron, and had declined receiving them in it. This circumstance, of itself, sufficiently proves the equivocal advantage enjoyed by the possession of these craft, which formed so conspicuous a part of Commodore Chauncey's force on paper, the enemy

being unwilling to injure the manœuvring of his vessels by using them.

This success virtually terminated the naval struggle for the command of Lake Ontario, during the season of 1813, Sir James Yeo, probably influenced by the nature of the combat on the 28th of September, appearing disposed to wait for a reinforcement before he risked another action. For the remainder of the season, Commodore Chauncey was employed in watching the enemy in Kingston, and in aiding the army in its descent of the St. Lawrence. It was the wish of the naval commander to attack Kingston, and he had even been flattered with the promise that his favourite project should be adopted, but about the middle of October the scheme appears to have been entirely abandoned, in order to make a descent on Montreal. Had the first plan been adhered to, it is almost certain success would have attended it, and the whole character of the war might have been changed.

Early in November Commodore Chauncey was laying at the outlet of the St. Lawrence, below the east end of Long Island, when Sir James Yeo came out with his ships, and anchored within two leagues of him, the squadrons being separated by a chain of small islands. There was but one passage by which this chain could be passed, and the Americans sent boats to sound it, intending to lighten and go through, when the enemy lifted his anchors and returned to port. On the 11th, the army having gone down the river, the American squadron went into the Harbour.

Two days later Commodore Chauncey, who had now almost an undisturbed possession of the lake, went to the Genesee, where, on the 16th of the month, he took on board 1100 men, belonging to the army of General Harrison. A severe gale came on, by which the vessels were separated, some being driven as far west as the head of the lake. The transports, into which most of the small schooners were now converted, having been finally despatched, the commodore went off Kingston again, to occupy the enemy, and to cover the passage of the troops. All the transports had arrived on the 21st but the *Julia*, which did not get in until a few days later. The *Fair American* had gone ashore near the Niagara, during the gale, but was got off, and reached the Harbour on the 27th. By this time, the navigation of the lake was virtually closed, and it being too late to attempt any naval operations, while the duty of transporting the troops and stores had been successfully performed, preparations were made to lay the vessels up for the winter.

Thus terminated the naval operations on Lake Ontario, during the season of 1813. The peculiar nature of the service rendered the duties of both commanders extremely arduous, and each appears to have acquitted himself well in his peculiar station. It was the policy, and it is understood it had been made the enjoined duty of Sir James Yeo, by means of especial orders, to avoid a general action, unless under decidedly favourable circumstances, and the identified character of his vessels enabled him to pursue the course prescribed with tolerable success, though the perseverance and personal intrepidity

of his antagonist, had forced him to the very verge of a total defeat in the affair of the 28th of September. In executing his orders, the English commodore, who was an officer of rare merit, manifested great steadiness, self-denial and address, and the skill and boldness with which he manœuvred, received the applause of his enemies. That he was kept principally on the defensive, and was prevented from effecting any thing of importance, was owing to the vigilance and activity of his opponent, who so often anticipated his measures, and so closely pressed him, whenever there was an opportunity to engage.

But the success of the naval efforts of this season, was decidedly with the Americans. By covering the descent at York, and producing the fall of that place, where a very large amount of stores was captured, one new cruiser of some force destroyed, and a second brought off, Commodore Chauncey deprived his enemy of the means of effectually securing a decided superiority on the lake, as the first blow of the season. The fall of Fort George, which altogether depended on the co-operation of the navy, led the way to the success on the upper lake, to the recapture of Michigan, and to the virtual submission, for the remainder of the campaign, of all the higher counties of Upper Canada. An army was transported from the foot of the lake to its head, in the spring, and from near the head to the foot in the autumn; nor is it known that a single man, gun, or any amount of stores that was confided to the navy, in the course of this service, fell into the hands of the enemy. All the duty required for the army was effectually accomplished, and without molestation from the English, while the latter, with the exception of a very short period, during which the Pike was waiting for her guns, was obliged to perform the similar service for his own army, clandestinely, and with the utmost caution. It has been seen that one of his transports was burned, and that five were captured. The only reverse sustained by the American squadron, was the loss of the Growler and Julia, as mentioned, and this resulted from no fault of the commanding officer, whose dispositions were officer-like and simple.

In the course of the summer the hostile squadrons were three times engaged. On two of these occasions the enemy had the wind, or obtained it before the ships could close, and it rested with him, of course, to bring on a general action, or to avoid it. On the third, the Americans attacked with so much vigour, with only a part of their force, as to leave no doubt what would have been the result, had not the English vessels put before the wind. Among American seamen, the manner in which Commodore Chauncey bore down on the hostile line of the enemy, on the 28th of September, supported by Mr. Finch, in the Governor Tompkins, and a schooner in tow, has ever been considered as an instance of high professional feeling and spirit; cases of so much self-devotion, coolness, and intrepidity, in which British squadrons have been the party attacked, being extremely rare in modern times. It is not certain that a parallel to it can be found within a century, if we except a very striking instance

afforded by the conduct of Captain Perry, of which there will be occasion to speak, in the succeeding chapter.

Notwithstanding the services of the naval commander on the great lakes, public expectation, at the time, was disappointed. Bodies of men, who are seldom competent to judge of the nicer circumstances that qualify merit, and particularly that which is so exclusively of a professional character as the conduct of a naval commander, are apt to assume that success is the only admissible standard, and while the success of the season was clearly with the Americans, it was not success of the brilliant and attractive nature, that is the most apt to extort popular admiration. Few were qualified to understand that the size of the lake favoured the policy of Sir James Yeo, by enabling him to run under the guns of his own batteries, when hardest pressed, but the majority considered that the smaller the sheet of water on which the operations occurred, the easier it would be to bring on an action. On the several occasions in which the American squadron chased the enemy into Burlington, Amherst, and Kingston Bays, the public was more disposed to regard the force in the presence of which the different escapes were made, than the facilities that existed to effect it. It called for victory, without recollecting that the consent of both belligerents would be necessary to obtain even a battle; and of all those who were most disposed to compare the absence of a victory on Lake Ontario, with the brilliant successes elsewhere obtained, few probably remembered that no instance occurred in the whole war, the peculiar case of the Essex and President excepted, in which either an English or an American public vessel was captured, after a battle, and in which the defeated party avoided the combat. Owing to the chances of war, in no instance whatever, was an English ship taken under such circumstances.

But time has gradually weakened this feeling, and the country already views the noble and masterly efforts of Commodore Chauncey in their true light. The rapidity and decision with which he created a force, as it might be, in a wilderness, the professional resources that he discovered in attaining this great end, and the combined gallantry and prudence with which he manœuvred before the enemy, are beginning to be fully appreciated, while the intrepidity with which he carried his own ship into action off York, has always been a subject of honest exultation in the service to which he belongs. If the American commander committed a fault in the course of the arduous duties of the months of August, September, October, and November, it was in not making a signal to his squadron to cast off their tows, after the enemy bore up on the 28th of September; but though it may now be easy to detect the error, he chose the side of a discreet caution, there being every probability of his getting alongside of the enemy on his own terms, as soon as the gale should abate. That he did not, was purely the result of accident, or rather of the mistake of an experienced and prudent officer, on whose report he had every motive to rely. Had Commodore Chauncey followed Sir James Yeo into Burlington Bay, on that occasion, he would probably have obtained one of the highest reputations of the American navy, without as much deserving it as at present.

CHAPTER XXI.

Operations on Lake Erie—Force of the enemy—The *Lawrence* and *Niagara* got over the bar at Presque Isle—Force of the squadron under Capt. Perry—General action, and capture of the whole British fleet—Captains Perry and Elliott receive gold medals—Result of this victory—Capt. Perry resigns the command to Capt. Elliott—Promotion of Capt. Perry, and appointment to the command of the *Java*.

THE manner in which the service commenced on the upper lakes, has been already mentioned, but it will connect the narrative to make a short recapitulation. The first organisation of any naval force on this lake was commenced by a seaman of those waters, who received the appointment of a sailing-master, shortly after the commencement of the war. This gentleman, Mr. Dobbins, was actively employed in subordinate stations until the close of the war. Under his supervision, much of the earlier preparations for creating a maritime force were commenced. It will be remembered that late in the autumn of 1812, Lieutenant Elliott had been sent to the foot of Erie to contract for some schooners. He was soon after recalled to Ontario, and succeeded in command by Lieutenant Angus. Not long after the landing at Erie, Mr. Angus returned to the sea-board, and Lieutenant Pettigrew, for a short time, was in command. In the course of the winter, Captain O. H. Perry, then a young master and commander at the head of the flotilla of gun-boats, at Newport, Rhode Island, finding no immediate prospect of getting to sea in a sloop-of-war, volunteered for the lake service. Captain Perry brought on with him a number of officers, and a few men, and Commodore Chauncey gladly availed himself of the presence of an officer of his rank, known spirit, and zeal, to send him on the upper lakes, in command, where he arrived in the course of the winter, superseding Mr. Dobbins, who then was in charge. From this time, until the navigation opened, Captain Perry was actively employed, under all the embarrassments of his frontier position, in organising and creating a force, with which he might contend with the enemy for the mastery of those important waters. Two large brigs, to mount 20 guns each, were laid down at Presque Isle, and a few gun-vessels, or schooners, were also completed. The spring passed in procuring guns, shot, and other supplies, and, as circumstances allowed, a draft of men would arrive from below, to aid in equipping the different vessels. As soon as the squadron of Commodore Chauncey appeared off the mouth of Niagara, Captain Perry, with some of his officers, went to join it, and the former was efficiently employed in superintending the disembarkation of the troops, as has been already related. The fall of Fort George produced that of Fort Erie, when the whole of the Niagara frontier came under the control of the American army.

Captain Perry now repaired to his own command, and with infinite labour, he succeeded in getting the vessels that had so long been detained in the Niagara, passing the enemy's batteries, out of the river. This important service was effected by the 12th of June, and preparations were immediately commenced for appearing on the lake. These

vessels consisted of the brig *Caledonia*, (a prize,) and the schooners *Catherine*, *Ohio*, and *Amelia*; with the sloop *Contractor*. The *Catherine* was named the *Somers*, the *Amelia* the *Tigress*, and the *Contractor* the *Trippe*. At this time, the enemy had a cruising force under the orders of Captain *Finnis*, which consisted of the *Queen Charlotte*, a ship of between two and three hundred tons, and mounting 17 guns; the *Lady Prevost*, a fine warlike schooner, of less than two hundred tons, that mounted 13 guns; the brig *Hunter*, a vessel somewhat smaller, of 10 guns, and three or four lighter cruisers. He was also building, at *Malden*, a ship of about the tonnage of the *Charlotte*, that was to mount 19 guns, and which was subsequently called the *Detroit*.

It was near the middle of June before Capt. *Perry* was ready to sail from the outlet of *Lake Erie*, for *Presque Isle*. There being no intention to engage the enemy, and little dread of meeting him in so short a run, as she came in sight of her port each vessel made the best of her way. The enemy had chosen this moment to look into *Presque Isle*, and both squadrons were in view from the shore, at the same time, though, fortunately for the Americans, the English did not get a sight of them, until they were too near the land to be intercepted. As the last vessel got in, the enemy hove in sight, in the offing.

The two brigs laid down in the winter, under the directions of Commodore *Chauncey*, had been launched towards the close of May, and were now in a state of forwardness. They were called the *Lawrence* and the *Niagara*. The schooners had been some time in the water, and Captain *Perry*, having all his vessels in one port, employed himself in getting them ready for service, as fast as possible. Still various stores were wanting. There was a great deficiency of men, particularly of seamen, and Captain *Perry*, and Mr. *D. Turner*, were, as yet, the only commissioned sea-officers on the lake. The latter, moreover, was quite young in years, as well as in rank.

Presque Isle, or, as the place is now called, *Erie*, was a good and spacious harbour; but it had a bar on which there was less than seven feet of water. This bar, which had hitherto answered the purpose of a fortification, now offered a serious obstruction to getting the brigs on the lake. It lay about half a mile outside, and offered great advantages to the enemy, did he choose to profit by them, for attacking the Americans while employed in passing it. So sensible was Captain *Perry* of this advantage, that he adopted the utmost secrecy in order to conceal his intentions, for it was known that the enemy had spies closely watching his movements.

Captain *Barclay* had lately superseded Captain *Finnis* in the command of the English force, and for near a week he had been blockading the American vessels, evidently with an intention to prevent their getting out, it being known that this bar could be crossed only in smooth water. On Friday, the 2d of August, he suddenly disappeared in the northern board.*

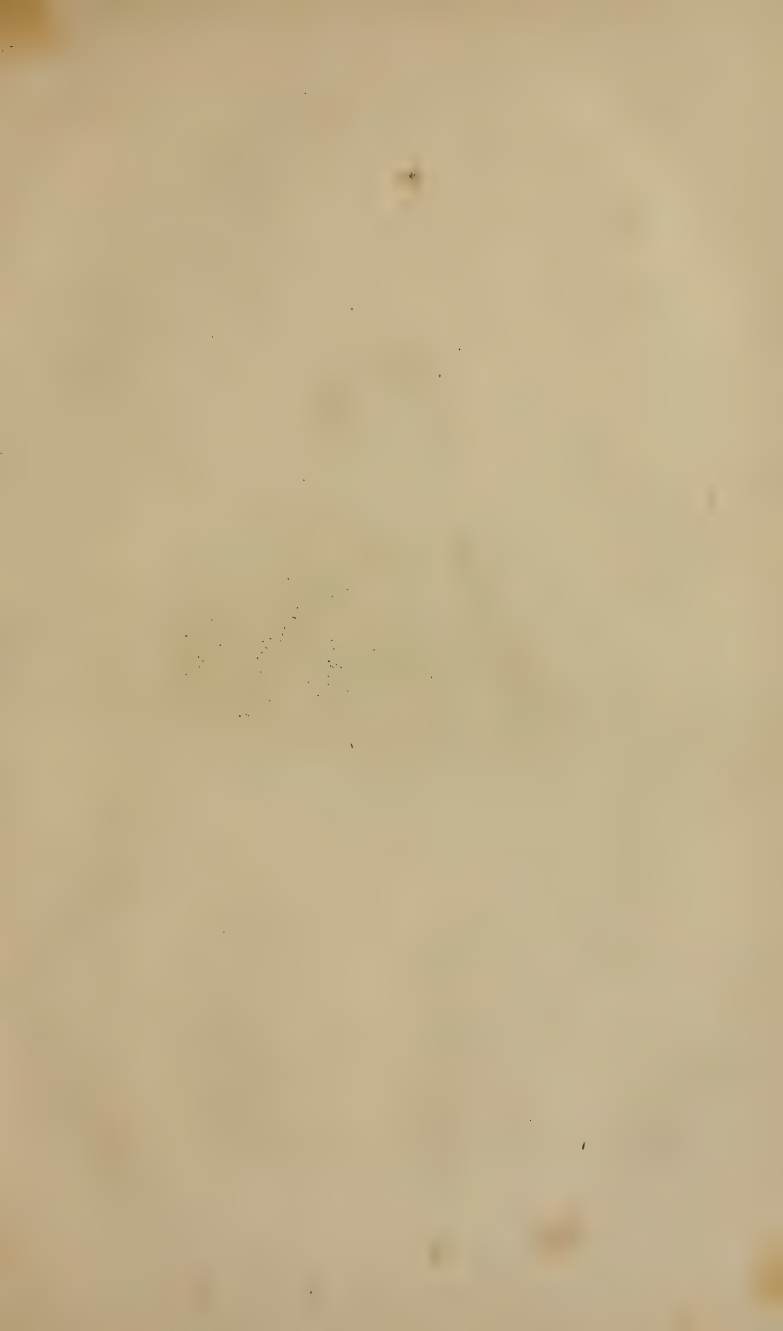
* It is said that Captain *Barclay* lost the command of *Lake Erie*, by accepting an invitation to a dinner given him by the inhabitants of ——. While his vessels were under the Canadian shore, the lake became smooth, and the bar passable. Captain *Perry* seized the precious moment, and effected his purpose.

The next day but one was Sunday, and the officers were ashore seeking the customary relaxation. Without any appearances of unusual preparation, Captain Perry privately gave the order to repair on board the respective vessels and to drop down to the bar. This command was immediately obeyed; and at about 2 P. M., the *Lawrence* had been towed to the point where the deepest water was to be found. Her guns were whipped out, and landed on the beach; two large scows, prepared for the purpose, were hauled alongside, and the work of lifting the brig proceeded as fast as possible. Pieces of massive timber had been run through the forward and after ports, and when the scows were sunk to the water's edge, the ends of the timbers were blocked up, supported by these floating foundations. The plugs were now put in the scows, and the water was pumped out of them. By this process, the brig was lifted quite two feet, though, when she was got on the bar, it was found that she still drew too much water. It became necessary, in consequence, to come-up every thing, to sink the scows anew, and to block up the timbers afresh. This duty occupied the night.

The schooners had crossed the bar, and were moored outside, and preparations were hurriedly made to receive an attack. About 8 A. M. the enemy re-appeared. At this time, the *Lawrence* was just passing the bar. A distant, short, and harmless cannonade ensued, though it had the effect to keep the enemy from running in. As soon as the *Lawrence* was in deep water, her guns were hoisted in, manned as fast as mounted, and the brig's broadside was sprung to bear on the English squadron. Fortunately, the *Niagara* crossed on the first trial; and before night, all the vessels were as ready for service, as circumstances would then allow. The enemy remained with his topsails to the mast half an hour, sullenly reconnoitering; he then filled, and went up the lake under a press of canvass.

This occurred on the 4th of August, and on the 5th, Captain Perry sailed in quest of the enemy, having received on board a number of soldiers and volunteers. He ran off Long Point, and sweeping the Canada shore for some distance, returned to Erie on the 8th. Taking in some supplies, he was about to proceed up the lake again, when intelligence arrived that the party sent from below, under Lieutenant Elliott, was at Cattaraugus, on its way to join the squadron. A vessel was immediately sent for this acceptable reinforcement. Shortly after its arrival, the commissions that had been made out some time previously, were received from below. By these changes, Mr. Elliott became a master and commander, and Messrs. Holdup, Packett, Yarnell, Edwards, and Conklin, were raised to the rank of lieutenants. Most of these gentlemen, however, had been acting for some months.

The American squadron now consisted of the *Lawrence* 20, Captain Perry; *Niagara* 20, Captain Elliott; *Caledonia* 3, Mr. M'Grath, a purser; *Ariel* 4, Lieutenant Packett; *Trippe* 1, Lieutenant Smith; *Tigress* 1, Lieutenant Conklin; *Somers* 2, Mr. Almy; *Scorpion* 2, Mr. Champlin; *Ohio* 1, Mr. Dobbins; and *Porcupine* 1, Mr. Senatt. On the 18th of August it sailed from Erie, and off Sandusky, a few





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days later, it chased, and was near capturing one of the enemy's schooners.

The squadron cruised for several days, near the entrance of the strait, when Captain Perry was taken ill with the fever peculiar to these waters, and shortly after the vessels went into a harbour, among some islands that lay at no great distance, which is called Put-in Bay.

Here a few changes occurred, Mr. Smith going to the Niagara, and Mr. Holdup to the Trippe; Mr. M'Grath went also to the Niagara, and Mr. Turner took command of the Caledonia. The Ohio was sent down the lake on duty.

While in port, on this occasion, Captain Perry contemplated an attack on the enemy's vessels, by means of boats, and orders were issued, accordingly, to drill the people with muffled oars.

The squadron was still lying at Put-in Bay on the morning of the 10th of September, when, at daylight, the enemy's ships were discovered at the N. W. from the mast-head of the Lawrence. A signal was immediately made for all the vessels to get under way. The wind was light at S. W., and there was no mode of obtaining the weather gage of the enemy, a very important measure with the peculiar armament of the largest of the American vessels, but by beating round some small islands that lay in the way. It being thought there was not sufficient time for this, though the boats were got ahead to tow, a signal was about to be made for the vessels to ware, and to pass to leeward of the islands, with an intention of giving the enemy this great advantage, when the wind shifted to S. E. By this change the American squadron was enabled to pass in the desired direction, and to gain the wind. When he perceived the American vessels clearing the land, or about 10 A. M., the enemy hove-to, in a line, with his ships' heads to the southward and westward. At this time the two squadrons were about three leagues asunder, the breeze being still at S. E., and sufficient to work with. After standing down, until about a league from the English, where a better view was got of the manner in which the enemy had formed his line, the leading vessels of his own squadron being within hail, Captain Perry communicated a new order of attack. It had been expected that the Queen Charlotte, the second of the English vessels, in regard to force, would be at the head of their line, and the Niagara had been destined to lead in, and to lie against her, Captain Perry having reserved for himself a commander's privilege of engaging the principal vessel of the opposing squadron; but, it now appearing that the anticipated arrangement had not been made, the plan was altered. Captain Barclay had formed his line with the Chippeway, Mr. Campbell, armed with one gun on a pivot, in the van; the Detroit, his own vessel, next; and the Hunter, Lieutenant Bignall; Queen Charlotte, Captain Finnis; Lady Prevost, Lieutenant Commandant Buchan; and Little Belt astern, in the order named. To oppose this line, the Ariel, of four long twelves, was stationed in the van, and the Scorpion, of one long and one short gun on circles, next her. The Lawrence, Captain Perry, came next; the two schooners just mentioned

keeping on her weather bow, having no quarters. The *Caledonia*, Lieutenant Turner, was the next astern, and the *Niagara*, Captain Elliott, was placed next to the *Caledonia*. These vessels were all up at the time, but the other light craft were more or less distant, each endeavouring to get into her berth. The order of battle for the remaining vessels, directed the *Tigress* to fall in astern of the *Niagara*, the *Somers* next, and the *Porcupine* and *Trippe*, in the order named.*

By this time the wind had got to be very light, but the leading vessels were all in their stations, and the remainder were endeavouring to get in as fast as possible. The English vessels presented a very gallant array, and their appearance was beautiful and imposing. Their line was compact, with the heads of the vessels still to the southward and westward; their ensigns were just opening to the air; their vessels were freshly painted, and their canvass was new and perfect. The American line was more straggling. The order of battle required them to form within half a cable's length of each other, but the schooners astern could not close with the vessels ahead, which sailed faster, and had more light canvass, until some considerable time had elapsed.

A few minutes before twelve, the *Detroit* threw a twenty-four-pound shot at the *Lawrence*, then on her weather quarter, distant between one and two miles. Captain Perry now passed an order by trumpet, through the vessels astern, for the line to close to the prescribed order, and soon after, the *Scorpion* was hailed, and directed to begin with her long gun. At this moment, the American vessels in line were edging down upon the English, those in front being necessarily nearer to the enemy than those more astern, with the exception of the *Ariel* and *Scorpion*, which two schooners were to windward of the *Lawrence*. As the *Detroit* had an armament of long guns, Captain Barclay manifested his judgment in commencing the action in this manner, and in a short time, the firing between that ship, the *Lawrence*, and the two schooners at the head of the American line, got to be very animated. The *Lawrence* now showed a signal for the squadron to close, each vessel in her station, as previously designated. A few minutes later the vessels astern began to fire, and the action became general but distant. The *Lawrence*, however, appeared to be the principal aim of the enemy, and before the firing had lasted any material time, the *Detroit*, *Hunter*, and *Queen Charlotte*, were directing most of their efforts against her. The American brig endeavoured to close, and did succeed in getting within reach of canister, though not without suffering materially, as she fanned down upon the enemy. At this time, the support of the two schooners ahead, which were well commanded and fought, was

*In consequence of neither of the commanding officers having given his order of battle in his published official letter, it is difficult to obtain the stations of some of the smaller vessels. By some accounts, the *Lady Prevost* is said to have been between the *Detroit* and the *Queen Charlotte*, by others, the *Hunter*. The latter is believed to be the true statement. On the other hand, some accounts place the *Somers*, and others the *Tigress*, next astern of the *Niagara*. The fact is immaterial, but the account which seems to be best authenticated, has been chosen.

of the greatest moment to her, for the vessels astern, though in the line, could be of little use in diverting the fire, on account of their positions and the distance. After the firing had lasted some time, the Niagara hailed the Caledonia, and directed the latter to make room for the former to pass ahead. Mr. Turner put his helm up, and continued to near the enemy, until he was closer to his line, perhaps, than the commanding vessel; keeping up as warm a fire as his small armament would allow. The Niagara now became the vessel next astern of the Lawrence.

The cannonade had the usual effect of deadening the wind, and for two hours there was very little air. During all this time, the weight of the enemy's fire was directed against the Lawrence; the Queen Charlotte having filled, passed the Hunter, and closed with the Detroit, where she kept up a destructive cannonading on this devoted vessel. These united attacks nearly dismantled the American brig, besides producing great slaughter on board her. At the end of two hours and a half, agreeably to the report of Captain Perry, the enemy having filled, and the wind increasing, the two squadrons drew slowly ahead, the Lawrence necessarily falling astern and partially out of the combat. At this moment the Niagara passed to the southward and westward, a short distance to windward of the Lawrence, steering for the head of the enemy's line, and the Caledonia followed to leeward.

The vessels astern had not been idle, but, by dint of sweeping and sailing, they had all got within reach of their guns, and had been gradually closing, though not in the prescribed order. The rear of the line would seem to have inclined down towards the enemy, bringing the Trippe, Lieutenant Holdup, so near the Caledonia, that the latter sent a boat to her for a supply of cartridges.

Captain Perry, finding himself in a vessel that had been rendered nearly useless by the injuries she had received, and which was dropping out of the combat, got into his boat, and pulled after the Niagara, on board of which vessel he arrived at about half past 2. Soon after, the colours of the Lawrence were hauled down, that vessel being literally a wreck.

After a short consultation between Captains Perry and Elliott, the latter volunteered to take the boat of the former, and to proceed and bring the small vessels astern, which were already briskly engaged, into still closer action. This proposal being accepted, Captain Elliott pulled down the line, passing within hail of all the small vessels astern, directing them to close within half pistol-shot of the enemy, and to throw in grape and canister, as soon as they could get the desired positions. He then repaired on board the Somers, and took charge of that schooner in person.

When the enemy saw the colours of the Lawrence come down, he confidently believed that he had gained the day. His men appeared over the bulwarks of the different vessels and gave three cheers. For a few minutes, indeed, there appears to have been, as if by common consent, a general cessation in the firing, during which both parties were preparing for a desperate and final effort. The wind

had freshened, and the position of the Niagara, which brig was now abeam of the leading English vessel, was commanding, while the gun-vessels astern, in consequence of the increasing breeze, were enabled to close very fast.

At 45 minutes past 2, or when time had been given to the gun-vessels to receive the order mentioned, Captain Perry showed the signal from the Niagara, for close action, and immediately bore up, under his foresail, topsails, and topgallant-sail. As the American vessels hoisted their answering flags, this order was received with three cheers, and it was obeyed with alacrity and spirit. The enemy now attempted to ware round, to get fresh broadsides to bear, in doing which his line got into confusion, and the two ships for a short time, were foul of each other, while the Lady Prevost had so far shifted her berth, as to be both to the westward and to the leeward of the Detroit. At this critical moment, the Niagara came steadily down, within half pistol-shot of the enemy, standing between the Chippeway and Lady Prevost, on one side, and the Detroit, Queen Charlotte, and Hunter, on the other. In passing, she poured in her broadsides, starboard and larboard, ranged ahead of the ships, luffed athwart their bows, and continued delivering a close and deadly fire. The shrieks from the Detroit, proclaimed that the tide of battle had turned. At the same moment, the gun-vessels and Caledonia were throwing in close discharges of grape and canister astern. A conflict so fearfully close, and so deadly, was necessarily short. In fifteen or twenty minutes after the Niagara bore up, a hail was passed among the small vessels, to say that the enemy had struck, and an officer of the Queen Charlotte appeared on the taffrail of that ship, waving a white handkerchief, bent to a boarding-pike.

As soon as the smoke cleared away, the two squadrons were found partly intermingled. The Niagara lay to leeward of the Detroit, Queen Charlotte, and Hunter, and the Caledonia, with one or two of the gun-vessels, was between the latter and the Lady Prevost. On board the Niagara, the signal for close action was still abroad, while the small vessels were sternly wearing their answering flags. The Little Belt and Chippeway were endeavouring to escape to leeward, but they were shortly after brought to by the Scorpion and Trippe; while the Lawrence was lying astern and to windward, with the American colours again flying. The battle had commenced about noon, and it terminated at 3, with the exception of a few shots fired at the two vessels that attempted to escape; which were not overtaken until an hour later.

In this decisive action, so far as their people were concerned, the two squadrons suffered in nearly an equal degree, the manner in which the Lawrence was cut up, being almost without an example in naval warfare. It is understood that when Captain Perry left her, she had but one gun on her starboard side, or that on which she was engaged, which could be used, and that gallant officer is said to have aided in firing it in person, the last time it was discharged. Of her crew 22 were killed, and 61 were wounded, most of the latter severely. When Captain Perry left with his brother and six of his people, there

remained on board but a very few sound men. The Niagara had 2 killed, and 25 wounded, or about one-fourth of all at quarters.* The other vessels suffered relatively less. The Caledonia, Lieutenant Turner, though carried into the hottest of the action, and entirely without quarters, had 3 men wounded; the Trippe, Lieutenant Holdup,† which, for some time, was quite as closely engaged, and was equally without quarters, had 2 men wounded; the Somers, Mr. Almy, the same; the Ariel, Lieutenant Packett, had 1 man killed and 3 wounded; the Scorpion, Mr. Champlin, had 2 killed, one of whom was a midshipman; the Tigress, Lieutenant Conklin, and Porcupine, Mr. Senatt, had no one hurt. The total loss of the squadron was 27 killed, and 96 wounded, or altogether, 123 men; of whom 12 were quarter-deck officers. More than a hundred men were unfit for duty, among the different vessels, previously to the action, cholera morbus and dysentery prevailing in the squadron. Captain Perry himself, was labouring under debility, from a recent attack of the lake fever, and could hardly be said to be in a proper condition for service, when he met the enemy, a circumstance that greatly enhances the estimate of his personal exertions, on this memorable occasion. Among the Americans slain were Lieutenant Brooks, the commanding marine officer, and Messrs. Laub and Clark, midshipmen; and among the wounded, Messrs. Yarnall and Forrest, the first and second lieutenants of the Lawrence, Mr. Taylor, master, Mr. Hambleton, purser, and Messrs. Swartwout and Claxton, midshipmen. Mr. Edwards, 2d lieutenant of the Niagara, and Mr. Cummings, a midshipman, were also wounded.

For two hours, the weight of the enemy's fire had been thrown into the Lawrence; and the water being perfectly smooth, his long guns had committed great havoc, before the carronades of the American vessels could be made available. For much of this period, it is believed that the efforts of the enemy were little diverted, except by the fire of the two leading schooners, a gun of one of which (the Ariel) had early bursted, the two long guns of the brigs, and the two long guns of the Caledonia. Although the enemy undoubtedly suffered by this fire, it was not directed at a single object, as was the case with that of the English, who appeared to think, that by destroying the American commanding vessel, they would conquer. It is true that carronades were used on both sides, at an earlier stage of the action than that mentioned, but there is good reason for thinking that they did but little execution for the first hour. When they did tell, the Lawrence, the vessel nearest to the enemy, if the Caledonia be excepted, necessarily became their object, and, by this time,

*This was the official account, made up on the reports of subordinates. Her own surgeon, however, has since stated under oath, that 5 were killed and near 30 wounded, including the slight hurts. The pretence that the erroneous report was sent to Captain Perry by Captain Elliott is entitled to no respect. All reports of this nature pass through the captain of a vessel of war, from the pursers and medical officers. Neither Captain Perry nor Captain Elliott was probably in the least censurable for the error, which originated with some medical officer or other, though not the surgeon of the brig, who was too ill to make any such report, when the letter was sent. The scattered state of the crew might account for the mistake.

†The late Captain Holdup-Stevens.

the efficiency of her own battery was much lessened. As a consequence of these peculiar circumstances, her starboard bulwarks were nearly beaten in; and even her larboard were greatly injured, many of the enemy's heavy shot passing through both sides; while every gun was finally disabled in the batteries fought. Although much has been justly said of the manner in which the *Bon Homme Richard* and the *Essex* were injured, neither of these ships suffered, relatively, in a degree proportioned to the *Lawrence*. Distinguished as were the two former vessels, for the indomitable resolution with which they withstood the destructive fire directed against them, it did not surpass that manifested on board the latter; and it ought to be mentioned, that throughout the whole of this trying day, her people, who had been so short a time acting together, manifested a steadiness and a discipline worthy of veterans.

Although the *Niagara* suffered in a much less degree, even 27 men killed and wounded, in a ship's company that mustered little more than 100 souls at quarters, under ordinary circumstances, would be thought a large proportion. Neither the *Niagara* nor any of the smaller vessels were injured in an unusual manner in their hulls, spars, and sails, the enemy having expended so much of his efforts against the *Lawrence*, and being so soon silenced when that brig and the gun-vessels got their raking positions, at the close of the conflict.

The injuries sustained by the English were more divided, but were necessarily great. According to the official report of Captain Barclay, his vessels lost 41 killed, and 94 wounded, making a total of 135, including twelve officers, the precise number lost by the Americans. No report has been published, in which the loss of the respective vessels was given, but the *Detroit* had her first lieutenant killed, and her commander, Captain Barclay, with her purser, wounded. Captain Finnis, of the *Queen Charlotte* was also slain, and her first lieutenant was wounded. The commanding officer and first lieutenant of the *Lady Prevost* were among the wounded, as were the commanding officers of the *Hunter* and *Chippeway*. All the vessels were a good deal injured in their sails and hulls; the *Queen Charlotte* suffering most in proportion. Both the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte*, however, rolled the masts out of them, at anchor at Put-in Bay, in a gale of wind, two days after the action.

It is not easy to make a just comparison between the forces of the hostile squadrons, on this occasion. In certain situations the Americans would have been materially superior, while in others the enemy might possess the advantage in perhaps an equal degree.* In the

* Such was the opinion of the author, when this work was originally prepared for the press. More accurate intelligence, however, has satisfied him, that the disparity of force was greater in favour of the Americans than he had first supposed. The *Lawrence* and *Niagara* measured 110 feet on deck, and had more than 29 feet of moulded beam; or were of about 450 tons, carpenter's measurement. Authentic accounts from the custom house show that the *Detroit* and *Charlotte* were less than 100 feet on deck, and each had less than 27 feet of beam. The *Prevost* and *Hunter* were much lighter vessels than has been generally supposed, and the armament of the last was very insignificant. When we come to consider the matter, in connection with the metal, however, it is that the superiority of the Americans was most apparent; as the following analysis will show.

In the first place, though the English had 63 guns to 54 of the Americans, in consequence of so many of the guns of the last being on pivots, each fought just 34 in broad

circumstances under which the action was actually fought, the peculiar advantages and disadvantages were nearly equalised, the lightness of the wind, preventing either of the two largest of the American vessels from profiting by its peculiar mode of efficiency, until quite near the close of the engagement, and particularly favouring the armament of the *Detroit*; while the smoothness of the water rendered the light vessels of the Americans very destructive, as soon as they could be got within a proper range. The *Detroit* has been represented on good authority, to have been both a heavier and stronger ship than either of the American brigs, and the *Queen Charlotte* proved to be a much finer vessel than had been expected; while the *Lady Prevost* was found to be a large, warlike schooner. It was, perhaps unfortunate for the enemy, that the armaments of the two last were not available under the circumstances which rendered the *Detroit* so efficient, as it destroyed the unity of his efforts. In short,

side. In the number of available guns, therefore, the parties were equal.

Allowing that the English got as many of their heaviest guns in broadside, at a time, as was possible, and that the Americans did the same, though the last had only to shift over one chase-gun in each of the longest brigs to do this, as they are known to have done, the long guns would stand as follows, viz:

American.		English.	
3	32's	2	24's
4	24's	1	18
8	12's	8	12's
<hr/>		5	9's
15 guns,	288 lbs. metal.	7	6's
<hr/>		<hr/>	
		23 guns,	249 lbs. metal.

No one can deny that 15 long guns, which throw 288 lbs. of metal, or an average of 19 lbs. a gun, are very essentially superior in a naval action, to 23 guns, which throw 249 lbs. of metal; or an average of less than 10 lbs. a gun. In this estimate, all the heaviest of the English guns, moreover, are counted: That is to say, the *Detroit* had, of broadside long guns, 2 24's, 6 12's, and 8 9's. She had also 2 carronades. Now, in this estimate we make her 9 guns in broadside to consist of the 2 24's, the 6 12's and 1 of the 9's, or give her the heaviest metal she could by possibility use.

As great stress has been laid on the superiority of the English in long guns, we will make another comparison. Each party had just 8 long 12's. These equalize each other; and putting them aside, we find the Americans with 3 long 32's and 4 long 24's, or 7 guns averaging more than 27 lbs. of shot each, to cope with a force of 2 long 24's, 1 do. 18, 5 do. 9's, and 7 do. 6's; or 15 long guns averaging 10 lbs. each. Again, we will deduct 3 of the American 24's for the two English 24's and the 18 lb. gun. This will leave the Americans 3 32's and 1 24, or 4 guns, throwing an average of 30 lbs. of metal a gun, to cope with 5 9's, and 7 6's; or 12 guns, throwing an average of 7 1-2 lbs. of metal a gun. It is scarcely necessary to say where the superiority lies.

In carronades, the account stands thus in broadside; after allowing for as many long guns as could be used, as already stated.

American.		English.	
19	32's	6	24's
1	24.	4	12's.
<hr/>		<hr/>	
20 guns,	632 lbs. of metal.	10 guns,	192 lbs. of metal.

If the broadside guns are calculated, in the manner in which they were ordinarily mounted, and without reference to the circumstances of shifting over the heaviest of the long guns to meet the exigencies of such a combat, the comparison would be still more in favour of the Americans. Thus, of the 33 long guns of the English, 23 throw an average of only 7 lbs. of metal each, or 159 lbs. altogether, which was more than equalled by 11, or less than half of the lightest American long guns.

In these estimates, we have followed Captain Barclay's account of his own force, given in great detail, and presume the facts to be very nearly, if not absolutely correct. As we have used care, in making our estimates, we think they will stand the test of the closest examination, or any argument that can be brought against them, with the exception of a misstatement of the facts.

the battle, for near half its duration, appears to have been fought, so far as efficiency was concerned, by the long guns of the two squadrons. This was particularly favourable to the Detroit and to the American gun-vessels; while the latter fought under the advantages of smooth water, and the disadvantages of having no quarters. The sides of the Detroit, which were unusually stout, were filled with shot that did not penetrate.*

In the number of men at quarters, there could have been no great disparity in the two squadrons. Mr. Yarnall, the first lieutenant of the Lawrence, testified before a court of inquiry, in 1815, that the brig to which he belonged had but "131 men and boys, of every description" on board her, and that of these but 103 were fit for duty in the action. The Niagara was nearly in the same state. A part of the crews of all the vessels belonged to the militia. Indeed, without a large proportion of volunteers from the army, the battle could not have been fought. The British were no better off, having a considerable proportion of soldiers on board their vessels, though men of that description were probably as efficient in smooth water, and under the actual circumstances, as ordinary sailors. Stress was laid at the time, on the fact that a portion of the British crews were provincials, but the history of this continent is filled with instances in which men of that character have gained battles, which went to increase the renown of the mother country, without obtaining any credit for it. The hardy frontier men of the American lakes, are as able to endure fatigue, as ready to engage, and as constant in battle, as the seamen of any marine in the world. They merely require good leaders, and these the English appear to have possessed in Captain Barclay and his assistants.

Captain Perry, in his report of the action, eulogised the conduct of his second in command, Captain Elliott, that of Mr. Turner, who commanded the Caledonia, and that of the officers of his own vessel. He also commended the officers of the Niagara, Mr. Packett of the Ariel, and Mr. Champlin of the Scorpion. It is now believed that

*The larboard side of the Detroit is stated to have had so many shot sticking in it, and so many mere indentations, that doubts have been suggested as to the quality of the American powder. It is probable, however, the circumstance arose from the distance, which, for a long time, was not within fair carronade range, especially with grape, or canister, over round shot. [Note to first edition.]

Since writing the above, evidence of the most satisfactory character, has been sent to the author, to prove that the conjecture contained in the close of the foregoing note to 1st and 2d editions, is true. Mr. Dobbins, who commanded the Ohio, on Lake Erie, states that a British officer told him on board the Detroit, a day or two after the action, that the Lawrence's guns must have been much overshot, as the round shot frequently struck his ship, and rebounded into the water. Mr. Dobbins further says, that the officers of the Lawrence admitted to him, that they generally shotted with round, grape and canister, and sometimes with a langrage over all! Had the experience of the officers of the Lawrence been greater, they would have understood, that a carronade will scarcely bear two shot, at the distance at which they engaged, much less three and four.

There would seem to be no doubt, that the English suffered very little from the fire of the Lawrence. Their loss was principally from the heavy guns of the gun-vessels. The loss of the Lawrence is at once explained by this circumstance; a vessel that was the principal aim of several vessels of the enemy, and whose fire was of little effect, necessarily becoming a target for her foes. It was an error often committed in the last war, to overcharge carronades, the men having a disposition to send as heavy a 'grist' as possible against the enemy.

the omission of the names of the commanders of the gun vessels astern, was accidental. It would seem that these vessels, in general, were conducted with great gallantry. Towards the close of the action, indeed, the *Caledonia*, and some of the gun-vessels would appear to have been handled with a boldness, considering their total want of quarters, bordering on temerity. They are known to have been within hail of the enemy, at the moment he struck, and to have been hailed by him. The grape and canister thrown by the *Niagara* and the schooners, during the last ten minutes of the battle, and which missed the enemy, rattled through the spars of the friendly vessels, as they lay opposite to each other, raking the English ahead and astern.

Captain Perry was criticised, at the time, for the manner in which he had brought his squadron into action, it being thought he should have waited until his line was more compactly formed, and his small vessels could have closed. It has been said, that "an officer seldom went into action worse, or got out of it better." Truth is too often made the sacrifice of antithesis. The mode of attack appears to have been deemed by the enemy judicious, an opinion that speaks in its favour. The lightness of the wind, in edging down, was the only circumstance that was particularly adverse to the American vessels, but its total failure could not have been foreseen. The shortness of the distance on the lake rendered escape so easy, when an officer was disposed to avoid a battle, that no commander, who desired an action, would have been pardonable for permitting a delay on such a plea. The line of battle was highly judicious, the manner in which the *Lawrence* was supported by the *Ariel* and *Scorpion* being simple and ingenious. By steering for the head of the enemy's line, the latter was prevented from gaining the wind by tacking, and when Captain Elliott imitated this manœuvre in the *Niagara*, the American squadron had a very commanding position, of which Captain Perry promptly availed himself. In a word, the American commander appears to have laid his plan with skill and judgment, and, in all in which it was frustrated, it would seem to have been the effect of accident. There has never been but one opinion of the manner in which he redeemed his error, even admitting that a fault was made at the outset, the united movements of the *Niagara* and of the small vessels, at the close of the action, having been as judicious as they were gallant and decisive. The personal deportment of Captain Perry, throughout the day, was worthy of all praise.* He did

* Popular opinion, which is too apt to confound distinctions in such matters, usually attaches the idea of more gallantry to the mere act of passing in a boat from one vessel to another, during an action, than in fighting on a vessel's deck. This was the least of Perry's merits. Captain Elliott was much longer in the same boat, and passed nearly through the whole line twice; and Mr. M'Grath had left the *Niagara* for one of the other vessels, in quest of shot, before Captain Perry quitted the *Lawrence*. A boat also passed twice, if not three times, from the *Caledonia* to the *Trippe* in the height of the engagement, and others, quite likely, were sent from vessel to vessel. Captain Perry's merit was an indomitable resolution not to be conquered, and the manner in which he sought new modes of victory, when the old ones failed him. The position taken by the *Niagara*, at the close of the affair, the fact, that he sought the best means of repairing his loss, and the motive with which he passed from vessel to vessel, constitute his claims to admiration. There was, no doubt, a personal risk, in all the boats, but there was personal risk every where on such an occasion.

not quit his own vessel when she became useless, to retire from the battle, but to gain it; an end that was fully obtained, and which resulted in a triumph.

The British vessels appear to have been gallantly fought, and were surrendered only when the battle was hopelessly lost. The fall of their different commanders was materially against them, though it is not probable the day could have been recovered after the Niagara gained the head of their line and the gun-vessels had closed. If the enemy made an error, it was in not tacking when he attempted to

The foregoing portion of this note has been the subject of divers attacks on the historian, it having been pretended its intention was to add to the reputation of Captain Elliott at the expense of that of Captain Perry. It is a little remarkable that this should be said while no one disputes the facts; or, no one on any show of authority. The following explanation will, it is hoped, set the whole matter in its true colours, before the reader.

Vulgar opinion had attached a degree of importance to the personal risk incurred by those who moved about in boats, on this occasion, that far exceeded its real magnitude. But, whatever may have been the amount of this risk, it is not easy to show why Mr. McGrath, who went from the Niagara to the Lawrence, in a boat, before Captain Perry went from the Lawrence to the Niagara, should not have just as much credit for the exploit, as his commanding officer. The same is true of every officer and man who went in boats that day. This is so obviously just as to require no argument.

But, the real object of the note, was to take Captain Perry out of the category of those who did this particular service, and to point out the real distinction he had gained. So long as his merit was confined to the mere gallantry of passing in a boat, he ought, in all equity, to share the credit with those who passed with him, as well as with those who were in the other boats. The *motive* was Captain Perry's *alone*; the *risk*, he shared with others; though it is not probable that the risk in the boats was half as much as when the parties were on the decks of their respective vessels.

It has been pretended that the feat of shifting a flag during an engagement, was almost peculiar to Captain Perry. This is very far from being true, though the examples neither add to, nor lessen that officer's merit. The Duke of York shifted his flag, in the battle of Solebay, and in the celebrated battle off the Texel, fought August 11th, 1673, Sprague, one of the English admirals, not only shifted his flag from the Royal Prince to the St. George, on account of the damages sustained by the former, but quitted the St. George also, after she was cut to pieces, and actually lost his life in passing towards a third vessel, with the intention of hoisting his flag on board her. In the same action, Van Tromp, shifted his flag from the Golden Lion to the Comet, and for a similar reason. In actions of the character of that on Lake Erie, or flotilla combats, many commanders have been passing from vessel to vessel most of the time. If the mere personal exposure be insisted on, as Captain Perry's great merit, in this affair, his friends must be content to place him much lower than even several American officers. Commodore Chauncey pulled through a warm fire, in the attack on Little York, going the whole length of his line; and in the battle of Plattsburg Bay, the present Commander Platt, had a heavy shot pass through his boat, while sent on duty in the heat of the combat. Boats were in the water, in several of the sharp affairs before Tripoli, and the late Commodore Creighton, then a master's mate of the John Adams, had a boat sunk under him, with several of her crew killed and wounded. What was the personal risk of Captain Perry, or, for that matter, of any one who went in a boat, during the battle of Lake Erie, to that of the present Captain Gregory, when a lieutenant, who had five men out of eight, killed and wounded in his boat, before he would suffer himself to be taken by enemies, of four times his force.

The temper in which the subject of this note has been treated, may be seen in the following facts. Commander M'Kenzie, in the appendix to his life of Perry, first accuses the author of being insensible to Perry's merit on this occasion, and to justify his assertion, affects to quote the note itself, which he calls artful, and "framed to disparage Perry and magnify Elliott."

He then pretends to give the note, but instead of quoting it entire to let it speak for itself, first using language to induce the reader to suppose he does quote the whole note, he closes his quotation at the words "the whole line twice;" placing a period where the writer had put only a semi-colon, and omitting not only all that is said of the real merit of Perry, but all also that is said of any boat other than those of Perry and Elliott. The principal omission is so material as to change the whole character of the note, and has the direct effect of a misquotation; while the omission of the part which speaks of the last named boats, is obviously intended to make it appear that the writer had no other object in view than to glorify Captain Elliott.

Any one who will read our note, and then read Captain M'Kenzie's comments on it, coupled with his quotation, can see for himself how fairly that writer deals with controversy, and how completely he is disqualified to deal with history.

ware, but it is quite probable that the condition of his vessels did not admit of the former manœuvre. There was an instant when the enemy believed himself the conquerer, and a few minutes even, when the Americans doubted, though they never despaired; but a moment sufficed to change their feelings, teaching the successful the fickleness of fortune, and admonishing the depressed of the virtue of perseverance.

For his conduct in this battle, Captain Perry received a gold medal from Congress. Captain Elliott also received a gold medal. Rewards were bestowed on the officers and men generally, and the nation has long considered this action one of its proudest achievements on the water.

The results of the victory were instantaneous and of high importance. The four smallest of the prizes were fitted as transports, and, the *Lawrence* excepted, the American squadron was employed in the same duty. The English had evacuated Detroit, and with it Michigan, and on the 23d of September, the squadron conveyed a body of 1200 men to the vicinity of Malden, in Upper Canada, of which place they took possession; and on the 27th, Captain Perry ascended to Detroit in the *Ariel*, and re-occupied that town, in conjunction with the army. A day or two later, Captain Elliott, with the *Niagara*, *Lady Prevost*, *Scorpion*, and *Tigress*, went into Lake St. Clair to cut off the enemy's baggage. On the 2d of October a part of the vessels assembled at the mouth of the Thames, with stores for the army, and, as the latter advanced, Captain Elliott ascended the stream, with the *Scorpion*, *Porcupine*, and *Tigress*, until he reached a point where the banks of the river rendered it too hazardous to go any farther, by exposing the vessels to the fire of the Indians. The battle of the Moravian Towns was fought on the 5th of the same month, when the savages received a severe rebuke, and nearly the whole of the right wing of the British army in the Canadas, laid down their arms on the field, under a charge of the American mounted volunteers. After this success, which placed most of the upper part of the province in the hands of the conquerors, the vessels were employed in bringing away the ammunition and other captured stores. October 18th, General Harrison and Captain Perry, the latter of whom had been present at the battle on shore, issued a joint proclamation, for the better government of the conquered territory, assuring to the people their ancient laws and usages, and the rights of property.

On the 23d of October, the squadron transported the army of General Harrison to Buffalo, and on the 25th, Captain Perry resigned the command of the upper lakes to Captain Elliott, repairing himself to the sea-board. November 29th, this gallant and successful officer, received the commission of a captain, which was dated on the day of the victory, and soon after he was appointed to the command of the *Java* 44, a new frigate, then fitting for sea at Baltimore.*

* There is a letter on file in the Navy Department, in which Captain Perry, who had only been a commander about a year, expresses some doubts of the propriety of accepting this rank over the heads of his seniors, and his readiness to yield to their claims.

CHAPTER XXII.

Operations on Lake Ontario—Three new ships laid down at Sackett's Harbour—Sickness, and state of the service—Capt. Sinclair appointed to command on the upper lakes—Launch of the Superior—Force of Sir James Yeo—Oswego—Descent of the British—Spirited though hopeless defence under Lieut. Col. Mitchell—Loss of the Growler—Blockade of Sackett's Harbour—Reinforcements from the sea-board—Attempt on Sandy Creek, with loss—Launch of the Mohawk—Lieut. Gregory captures a gunboat, and destroys the enemy's cruiser, building at Presque Isle—American force—The British run the Charwell ashore and blow her up—Sir James Yeo is six days blockaded in Kingston—Capture of Lieut. Gregory and crew—Attempts to draw the enemy out—The enemy's new ship St. Lawrence—Attempt to blow her up.

THE winter of 1813-14 was passed at Sackett's Harbour and Kingston, in building vessels for the ensuing summer, and in vigilant watchfulness, lest the opposing force might attempt to obtain the command of the lake by a *coup de main*, while the vessels were on the stocks. Kingston had been made very strong, by means of works, while the fortifications at the Harbour were of little moment. As the lake was frozen from one place to the other, and sleighs could pass in a few hours, the Americans were kept constantly on the alert to guard against a surprise. The dispositions of Commodore Chauncey, for this purpose, were of the most judicious nature; and they so far commanded the respect of the enemy that, though bent on the enterprise, he never presumed to hazard the attempt.

In February three vessels were laid down at the Harbour, a frigate of 50 guns, and two large brigs, pierced for 22 guns each. As the English were known to be building extensively, the timber was also got out for a second frigate. Commodore Chauncey had been absent at the seat of government, and it was near the end of the month when he returned to the Harbour, where he found that Captain Crane, his second in command, and Mr. Eckford, the builder, had been very active during his absence. Early in March many deserters came in, who agreed in stating that the largest of the enemy's new ships, which had been laid down the previous autumn, was caulked and decked, and that she was pierced for 60 guns. A third ship was also said to be in preparation. In consequence of this intelligence, the size of the first American frigate was materially increased. March 26th, the important information was obtained that the enemy had actually laid down a two-decked vessel of unusual dimensions. Thus did those inland waters, on which, until quite lately, nothing had ever floated larger than a sloop of war, bid fair to witness the evolutions of fleets!

During the whole of this winter, the sickness at the Harbour was of the gravest character. For five months there was never less than half the crew of the Madison on the sick list, and she actually buried about one fifth of her people.

On the 7th of April one of the new brigs was launched and was called the Jefferson. Still the guns which had left New York two months previously, had not even reached Albany. The other brig

was launched on the 10th, and was called the *Jones*. Not a man or gun, however, had yet arrived. April the 11th, the enemy was ascertained to be in the stream, with all his vessels of the previous year, ready to go out, and on the 14th, he put his two frigates into the water. The *Lady of the Lake* was sent out to watch the motions of the English, as soon as the state of the ice permitted. About the close of this month, the operations on Ontario having become so important, and the distance being so great, Commodore Chauncey was relieved from the command of the upper lakes, Captain Sinclair, late of the *Pike*, being named his successor. At the same time Captain Elliott was ordered to Ontario, and was appointed to the *Sylph*, Captain Woolsey being transferred to the *Jones*. The armament of the former vessel, which had proved so inefficient the previous summer, was also altered to 16 twenty-four-pound carronades, in regular broadside, and she was rigged into a brig.

April 25th, while rowing guard, Lieutenant Dudley detected three boats in the offing, and immediately fired into them. The strangers did not return the fire, but pulled swiftly away. Obtaining a reinforcement, Mr. Dudley gave chase, but could not again fall in with the suspicious party. The next day there was a close search, and at the spot where the strangers received the fire of the guard-boat, six barrels of gunpowder were found in the lake, slung in such a manner, that one man might carry two at a time, across his shoulders. They had fuse-holes, and were, no doubt, intended to blow up the frigate. Had the adventurers got into the ship-yard, they must have been foiled, as a lieutenant, two midshipmen, and ten men, were every night on watch, under the ship. The *Madison* was moored so as to rake beneath her bottom, with her guns loaded with musket-balls. There were also double lines of sentinels without, and booms in the water.

About this time, when so much depended on the exertions of the builders, one of the most respectable of the ship-wrights, through some misunderstanding, was killed by a sentinel, and all the carpenters on the station, instantly struck work. The most disastrous consequences, appeared inevitable, but owing to the energy of Mr. Eckford, sustained by the influence of the commodore, the feelings of the men were soothed, and they returned to their labour.

The command of the lake was now thought so important, by both belligerents, that many ships were laid up on the ocean, in order to transfer their officers and crews to this service; and on the part of the Americans, twenty-five per cent. was added to the pay of all employed on it. It is believed that the enemy made a similar provision.

On the 2d of May, the American frigate was launched, and she was called the *Superior*. Another of less size was immediately laid down on her blocks. The guns began to arrive at the Harbour about the beginning of May, though the heaviest were still finding their way through the imperfect navigation of the Mohawk and Wood Creek, towards Oswego. On the 4th, the *Lady of the Lake*, Lieutenant Gregory, saw six sail of the enemy coming out of Kingston, about dusk, steering towards Amherst Bay; and on the 5th, the latter

appeared off Oswego, with seven sail. The greatest exertions were now made to get the Pike, Madison, Jefferson, Sylph, and Oneida, ready to follow him, these being all the vessels that had their armaments, the small schooners being now pretty generally abandoned as cruisers, on account of their qualities, and converted into transports. But a report was received from Captain Woolsey, then on duty at Oswego, that one of the new frigates was certainly in the enemy's squadron, and Mr. Gregory brought in information that he had seen the other off the Ducks the same day, when Commodore Chauncey abandoned the intention to go out, the great superiority of the English putting a battle out of the question.

The active cruising force under Sir James Yeo, consisted of the Prince Regent 58, Captain O'Conner, the flag-ship, armed with long heavy guns, sixty-eight and thirty-two-pound carronades, and containing near 500 men; the Princess Charlotte 42, Captain Mulcaster, having guns nearly or quite as heavy, and between 300 and 400 men; the Montreal, (late Wolfe,) Captain Downie; the Niagara, (late Royal George,) Captain Popham; the Charwell, (late Moira,) Lieutenant Dobbs; Magnet, (late Sidney Smith;) the Star, (late Melville,) Captain Clover; and the Netley, (late Beresford,) Lieutenant Owens. It was evident that nothing less than unusually heavy frigates could lie against the largest of these vessels.

Captain Woolsey had been sent to Oswego, to transport to the Harbour the heavy guns, cables, &c., of the two new frigates, most of which had reached the falls, twelve miles above the town, where they were kept for the sake of security, until the schooners could be loaded, and despatched singly. The Growler was in the river with that object, when Sir James Yeo, as mentioned, appeared in the offing. He was about to make a descent, with a body of troops, on the 5th, but the weather induced him to defer the enterprise. On this occasion, there was some firing, and the enemy abandoned an empty boat or two. The succeeding day, however, every thing being favourable, the original design was resumed.

Oswego was then a village containing less than 500 souls, and was without any regular fortifications. There had been a fort of some size, however, when the colonies belonged to the English, and the ruins of this work stood on an elevated plain, at the point of land on the side of the river opposite to the village. The works were tolerably large, but had never been strong. They were merely mounds of earth, with bastions of the same material, dry ditches of no great depth, a natural glacis, pickets, ramparts, and a few insignificant outworks. The American government permitted them to go to decay, and as there was no masonry, the ditch had nearly filled, the ramparts had worn down, the pickets and palisades had decayed, and even the gate and the barracks had disappeared. After the declaration of war, regiments frequently remaining at this point, for weeks at a time, on their way to the seat of hostilities, the spot being public property and offering facilities for disciplining troops, it had been selected as their temporary abode. Rude barracks had been constructed, and a gate was built. Some other trifling repairs

may have been made, an imperfect picketing was set up, but the ditches and ramparts might still have been crossed, at many places, on horseback. In short, as a mere fieldwork, with a sufficiency of men, this titular fort might have been formidable; it offered many facilities for cannonading in the offing and commanded the river in a degree proportioned to the number of men and guns that might happen to be in it; but against a superior force, in a serious fight, it could be of no essential service, and nothing was easier than to storm it, a siege being quite unnecessary. In short, it was no longer a fort, in the real signification of the term, nor was it ranked among the fortifications of the country.

At the moment when Sir James Yeo appeared, a battalion of the light artillery, consisting of 290 effectives, under Lieutenant Colonel Mitchell, was at Fort Oswego, and but a few militia had been called in, the adjacent country, for a distance of forty miles, being little more than a wilderness. It would trespass on another branch of the subject, minutely to relate the affair that followed. Lieutenant General Drummond commanded the English troops, and the two services united, disembarked with a force that has been differently computed at from 1000 to 1800 men. The ships opened a heavy fire, and a landing was effected. Lieutenant Colonel Mitchell, who had less than 400 men, and but two serviceable heavy guns, met the enemy at the shore, and fought him, as long as was at all prudent, in the woods, and on the plain, when he fell back towards the falls, as a retreat into the fort would have ensured his capture. Had the latter been in repair, less than 1000 men could not have prevented it from being stormed, on account of its size. The defence though hopeless from the first, was very spirited, and the enemy admitted a loss of 95 men, though it was thought to have been materially larger. The Americans lost 6 killed, 38 wounded, and 25 missing, or 69 in all. Lieutenant Pierce, and the few seamen present, fell into the ranks of the soldiers, and fought bravely. The *Growler*, the only transport in port, was sunk as soon as the landing was effected.

The enemy remained two days at Oswego, when they raised the *Growler*, and carried her off; this making the third time that vessel had been taken during the last year. But few stores were found in the village, however, the orders of Commodore Chauncey having required that they should be kept at the falls, until vessels were ready to sail with them. On the whole, the English derived very little advantage from this descent, and the Americans suffered scarcely any injury, besides the killed and wounded. The navy lost seven guns in the *Growler*, with a few shot and a little rigging. On the part of the enemy, Captain Mulcaster, of the *Princess Charlotte*, an officer of great gallantry, who had landed with a brigade of seamen, was badly wounded. The conduct of Lieutenant Colonel Mitchell was highly approved, and was thought to have been marked by steadiness, courage, and conduct.

Sir James Yeo now returned to Kingston, landed the troops, and on the 19th, he came out and chased the *Lady of the Lake* into the

Harbour, off which place he appeared with four ships and three brigs, blockading the port, for the first and only time during the war. At this moment, many of the stores, and some of the lighter guns, of which the direction had been changed, in consequence of the descent, were coming in by land, though the heavy guns and cables still remained in the Oswego river.

About the middle of May, reinforcements of officers and men, began to arrive from the sea-board. The Macedonian had been laid up in the Thames, and Mr. Rodgers, her first lieutenant, came in with her crew, between the 11th and the 21st. Captain Elliott rejoined the station on the 12th, and Captain Trenchard on the 15th. The Erie, a new sloop of war, then blockaded at Baltimore, had also been laid up, and her commander, Captain Ridgely, with his people, arrived some time before, and had been put on board the Jefferson.

Notwithstanding all the exertions that had been made in building, the ships were useless without guns and cables, and most of those intended for the two frigates, had yet to be transported to the Harbour by water, their weight and the state of the roads rendering other means too costly and difficult. Captain Woolsey, who was still entrusted with this duty, caused reports to be circulated that the heavy articles were to be sent back to the Oneida lake, and when time had been allowed for the enemy to receive this false information, he ran the guns over the falls, and at sunset, on the 28th of May, he reached Oswego with 19 boats, loaded with 21 long thirty-two-pounders, 10 twenty-four-pounders, 3 forty-two-pound carronades, and 10 cables. The look-outs having reported the coast clear, the brigade of boats rowed out of the river, at dusk, and after passing a dark and rainy night at the oars, reached the mouth of Big Salmon River, at sunrise on the 29th, one boat having unaccountably disappeared.

Captain Woolsey was accompanied by a detachment of 130 riflemen, under Major Appling, and at the Big Salmon he also met a party of Oneida Indians, which had been directed to follow on the shore. The brigade now proceeded, entered the Big Sandy Creek, and ascended about two miles, to its place of destination; the blockade rendering it necessary to convey the supplies by land the remainder of the distance.

At this time, the English squadron lay at anchor, a few miles from the Harbour, and the missing boat had gone ahead, in the professed hope of making the whole distance by water. Seeing the English ships, either by mistake or treachery it pulled directly for them, under a belief, real or pretended, that they were Americans. It is thought, however, that the people in the boat were deceived.

From the prisoners, Sir James Yeo learned the situation of the remainder of the brigade. He had three gun-boats on the station, and Captain Popham of the Montreal, was put into one, and Captain Spilsbury into another, having three cutters and a gig in company. After cruising without success, separately, the two parties joined, and having ascertained that the brigade had entered Sandy Creek, they followed on the 30th, with the expectation of capturing it. Ma-

Major Appling, being apprised of the approach of the enemy, placed his riflemen, supported by the Indians, in ambush, about half a mile below the place where Captain Woolsey was discharging the stores. The enemy had a party of marines on board, under two lieutenants of that corps. These, in conjunction with a body of seamen, were landed, and the gun-boats approached, throwing grape and canister, into the bushes, with a view to feel their way. Major Appling permitted the enemy to get quite near, when he threw in a close discharge of the rifle. The resistance was trifling, and in ten minutes the whole of the English demanded quarter. The enemy had a midshipman and 14 seamen and marines killed, and 2 lieutenants of marines, with 26 common men wounded. In addition to the wounded, there was a sufficient number of prisoners made to raise his total loss to 186. All the boats were taken, the three gun-vessels carrying 68, 24, 18 and 12 pound carronades. Among the prisoners were Captains Popham and Spilsbury, 4 sea-lieutenants, and 2 midshipmen. Although there was a considerable force a short distance above, without the range of the rifle, the command of Major Appling, which effected this handsome exploit, was scarcely equal to the enemy in numbers, yet he had but a single man wounded. This little success was the effect of a surprise and an ambush.

It will aid in giving a better idea of the condition of this frontier, at that time, as well as in proving the ardour with which the duty was conducted, if we state that, when the stores in charge of Captain Woolsey were landed, a frigate's cable was carried from Sandy Creek to the Harbour, a distance of eight miles, on the shoulders of a party of sailors.*

Most of the Superior's guns having now arrived, the enemy, who was well informed of all that passed on shore, raised the blockade on the 6th of June. Sir James Yeo, who had lately kept two brigs cruising between Oswego and the Harbour, joined them with the rest of his squadron, and they all disappeared in company, steering to the northwest. Two days later the last of the guns actually reached Sackett's Harbour. The frigate which had been laid down on the blocks of the Superior, was launched on the 11th of June, having been put into the water in 34 working days, from the time her keel was laid. She was named the Mohawk. Still the squadron was 500 men short of its complements, though the crew of the Congress 38, which was undergoing extensive repairs, at Portsmouth, N. H., had been ordered to this service. About the middle of the month the latter began to arrive. The enemy also continued to reinforce both his army and his marine, 200 boats at a time having been observed passing up the St. Lawrence.

About the middle of the month, Commodore Chauncey sent Acting Lieutenant Gregory, with three gigs, into the St. Lawrence, where the enemy had a line of gun-boats, to cover the passage of his sup-

*James, in his history, exults greatly at the circumstance of the blockade, pretending to make an enumeration of force of the two squadrons. On the side of the Americans he counts not only vessels that had been laid aside as cruisers, but vessels that had no armaments, and one frigate before she was launched!

plies and reinforcements, with directions to surprise some of his boats loaded with stores, and, if possible, to destroy them. For this purpose Mr. Gregory lay in ambush on one of the islands, but was discovered by the look-outs of the enemy, who immediately despatched a gun-boat in chase. Instead of retiring before this force, Mr. Gregory determined to become the assailant, and he dashed at the gun-boat, carrying her without the loss of a man. This vessel had an eighteen-pound carronade, and a crew of 18 men. While proceeding up the river with his prize, Mr. Gregory was chased by a much larger boat, mounting 2 guns, and pulling a great number of oars, which compelled him to scuttle and abandon her. On this occasion Mr. Gregory was accompanied by Messrs. Vaughan and Dixon, two gallantmariners of the lake, and he brought in nearly as many prisoners as he had men.

Ten days later, Mr. Gregory was sent with two gigs, accompanied as before by Messrs. Vaughan and Dixon, to Nicholas Island, near Presque Isle, to intercept some transports, failing of which he was to land at Presque Isle, where the enemy had a cruiser, intended to mount 14 guns, nearly ready to launch, and endeavour to destroy her. This duty, after running much risk, and suffering greatly from hunger, was effectually performed by the party, which was absent near a week. The day after his return from this expedition, Mr. Gregory received the commission of a lieutenant, which had been conferred on him for the handsome manner in which he had captured the gun-boat.

Unfortunately, at this period, while the squadron was fitting for the lake, and so much remained to be done to render it efficient, Commodore Chauncey, who was subjected to great exhaustion of mind and body, fell ill of the prevalent fever, and for the entire month of July, was confined to his bed. This was at the critical moment when General Brown had commenced that series of brilliant battles on the Niagara, which, by bringing the disciplined troops of America against those of England, established the high reputation with which the army, after all its early reverses, came out of the war of 1812. Although the duty at the Harbour proceeded, it necessarily suffered for the want of the mind which had planned it, and whose resources had been so amply proved to be equal to the effort of creating a fleet in a forest.

It had been hoped that the squadron would be ready to go out by the middle of July, but so many of the mechanics were taken ill, also, that it was found impossible to get the *Mohawk* ready before the 25th. At this time, Commodore Chauncey, rather than delay the departure of the vessels, was about to yield the command temporarily, to the officer next in rank, but being convalescent, and a change of crews having become indispensable, on account of the wish of the men to serve under their proper officers, three or four days were occupied in effecting these important alterations. On the afternoon of the 31st of July, the commodore was carried on board the *Superior*, and the American squadron sailed. Its force consisted of the *Superior* 62, Lieutenant Elton, Commodore Chauncey; *Mohawk* 42

Captain Jones ; Pike 28, Captain Crane ; Madison 24, Captain Trenchard ; Jefferson 22, Captain Ridgely ; Jones 22, Captain Woolsey ; Sylph 14, Captain Elliott ; Oneida 14, Lieutenant Commandant Brown, and the Lady of the Lake, look-out vessel—most of the small schooners having now been abandoned, as cruisers in squadron. There is no question that this force, which, with the exception of the Oneida, was composed of efficient vessels, was superior to that of the English, who were striving to regain the ascendancy, by constructing, as fast as possible, the two-decker already mentioned. The Americans, who had momentarily exhausted their means, under the disadvantages of bad roads, sickly mechanics, and their great distance by land from their supplies, were disposed to trust to the chances of the season, hoping that a victory might prevent the necessity of again building ; for, it should be remembered, in order to appreciate the efforts of the two belligerents, that the Americans, besides contending with the effects of a country just cleared of its timber, an evil from which the enemy was exempt at Kingston, had to build even the town that had grown up at the Harbour, in order to supply the common necessities of life.*

Commodore Chauncey, whose health rapidly improved in the pure air of the lake, appeared off the Niagara, now by the vicissitudes of war again in the possession of the English, on the 5th of August. The enemy's squadron was separated at the moment, his large vessels being down the lake, while many of his small cruisers had been convoying, or transporting troops and stores near the head. As the American vessels approached, they intercepted one of the English brigs, which was convoying troops from York to Niagara, and she was chased ashore about two leagues to the westward of Fort George. The Sylph, Captain Elliott, was ordered to run in, and destroy her, but just as the former was about to anchor, the enemy set fire to their brig, and she soon after blew up. This vessel is believed to have been called the Charwell, and to have mounted 14 guns.

The enemy having two cruising brigs and a schooner in the Niagara, both sides of which river were now in his possession by the capture of Fort Niagara, Commodore Chauncey left the Jefferson, Sylph, and Oneida to watch them, under the orders of Captain Ridgely of the former vessel, and looking into York, to ascertain if any portion of the British force was there, he went off Kingston, where he arrived on the 9th. One of the English ships was in the offing, and was chased into port by the American squadron, as it arrived. The next day, the Jones, Captain Woolsey, was sent to cruise between Oswego and the Harbour ; and the Conquest, one of the best of the schooners, which had been kept armed for any light service that might offer, was employed on the same duty, the enemy having intercepted some flour that was passing, by means of boats.

From this time, until the month of October, or for six weeks un-

*It is said that one of the greatest wants of the English was ship timber, the age of Kingston, and the practice of exporting it to England, having nearly stripped the north shore. On the other hand, one of the largest of the American vessels, was literally laid down in the forest.

interruptedly, Commodore Chauncey continued a close blockade of Sir James Yeo, in Kingston, having undisputed command of the entire lake. With a view to tempt the English to come out, he kept only four vessels in the offing, and as the enemy had an equal number, it was thought the provocation might induce him to risk a battle. Some guns were also sent ashore, with a view to bring the vessels as near as possible to an equality. The American ships were the *Superior* 58,* *Mohawk* 42, *Pike* 28, and *Madison* 24; the British, the *Prince Regent* 58, *Princess Charlotte* 42, *Wolfe* 25, and *Niagara* 24. There was also a large schooner at Kingston, and several gun-boats and smaller vessels. It is probable that there was a trifling superiority on the part of the Americans, notwithstanding, for in a conflict between vessels of so much force, the smaller craft could be of no great moment, but it was such a superiority as the enemy had long been accustomed to disregard; and the result showed that the American marine commanded his respect to a degree which rendered the minutest calculations of force necessary. Once or twice, the brigs joined the American commodore, in quest of supplies, but they were always sent away again, in order to keep but four ships on the station. The *Sylph* was ordered off *Presque Isle*, to intercept boats passing in-shore, and the rest of the vessels were kept on the south coast, between the Harbour and the Niagara.

In the course of the month of August, Major General Izard wrote to Commodore Chauncey, to inquire what means of transportation he could afford his division, the former being ordered to march from Plattsburg to reinforce the army, on the Niagara. In his answer, the latter stated that he could furnish four ships, four brigs, and seven schooners, the first eight mounting from 14 to 58 guns; and the latter acting as transports, being from 40 to 90 tons burthen. In a few days, however, he should have at his command 15 barges, that were 75 feet long each, and which would mount two guns apiece, having been built expressly to convey troops and stores.

On the 20th of August, the blockading ships were driven off by a gale, and on regaining their station on the 25th, the enemy could not be seen in port. Lieutenant Gregory, with Mr. Hart, a midshipman, was immediately sent in, in a gig, to reconnoitre. While on this duty, Mr. Gregory landed to set fire to a raft of picket-timber that he accidentally passed. This deviation from the direct route, brought the gig so near in-shore, that two barges of the enemy, carrying 30 men, were enabled to head it, as it doubled a point. A chase, and a sharp fire of musketry ensued, Mr. Gregory persevering in his attempt to escape, until Mr. Hart was killed, and five men out of eight were wounded, when this enterprising officer was obliged to surrender.

September the 5th, the four ships were still blockading Kingston; the Jefferson and Jones were off the Niagara, under Captain Ridgely; the *Sylph* and *Conquest* off *Presque Isle*, under Captain Elliott; and the *Oneida* was dismantling at the Harbour, the armament of

* Four guns having been landed.

that brig being put into the barges. On the 11th, the wind came from the northward, when Commodore Chauncey stood in towards Kingston, and brought to, just without the drop of the shot from the batteries, and the ships hoisted their ensigns, as a challenge for the enemy to come out. The English sprung their broadsides to bear, set their colours, but did not accept the defiance. It was now seen that the two-decker was launched, and she was ascertained to be very large. After remaining close in, for a considerable time, the American ships filled and gained an offing.*

The next day it came on to blow, and the squadron was compelled to make an offing for safety. The gale lasted until the 15th, when the *Lady of the Lake* joined, to say that General Izard had reached the Harbour. The ships now went in, for the first time, since the 2d of August, having kept the lake 45 days; much of the time under canvass. On the 16th, the look-out vessel was sent to order in the different brigs. The *Jefferson* and *Jones* arrived on the 17th, having been in the late gale, which drove them to the head of the lake. The first had thrown overboard ten guns, and was only kept off the shore, by carrying sail, and by the aid of the under-tow. A tremendous sea running, the brig was twice on her beam ends.

The division of General Izard consisted of 4000 men, of whom

* On this occasion, the hostile vessels were so near each other, that, by the aid of a glass, an American prisoner, then on board the *Prince Regent*, distinctly recognised Commodore Chauncey, standing in the gangway of the *Superior*, and pointed him out to the English officers. There is no question that the latter were much mortified at their situation, which was more probably the result of rigid instructions, than of any prudence on their part. It is said, on good authority, that some of the captains who were then on board the *Prince Regent*, did not hesitate to express their feelings, affirming it was a new thing for an English squadron to be blockaded by a force but little, if any superior. Sir James Yeo, who probably felt the painful character of his situation as much as any man in his fleet, on hearing these words, is said to have dashed his spy-glass over the breech of a gun, and to have retired to his cabin. Of the precise force of the two squadrons present, it is not easy to speak. The *Superior* was pierced for 64 guns, had originally mounted 62, and now mounted 58, the actual number of the *Prince Regent*. She was a little larger than the English ship; perhaps 150 tons. Between the *Princess Charlotte* and *Mohawk*, there was not much difference in force, though there was some in construction. The metal of the English ship is said to have been the heaviest. The *Pike* was a little heavier than the *Montreal*, and the *Madison* than the *Niagara*. As to men, there could be no essential difference, though it was in the power of Sir James Yeo, to get as many as he could desire from the army. It was known in the squadron, that Commodore Chauncey intended to disregard altogether the gun-boats and schooners, did they choose to come out. It has not been in our power to ascertain the metal of the *Prince Regent*, her gun-deck battery having been represented equally as thirty-twos, and as twenty-fours. If the former, the difference between the two squadrons was ideal rather than substantial.

The history of no marine probably furnishes an instance of a higher state of discipline than Commodore Chauncey had brought his squadron up to, during this summer. Officers of experience and merit, who were in the fleet, still speak of it with pleasure, as an exception even in a service remarkable for this high quality. At exercising sails, and in working ship, the method, accuracy, and rapidity of the crews, have been likened to the drill of favourite regiments of guards in Europe; and at the guns the men are described as having been literally terrible. They were kept constantly in practice with targets, handling heavy long guns like muskets, and pointing them like rifles. Discreet observers have even doubted whether the English could have got out, had they attempted it, as they must have advanced, bows on, through a channel less than a mile wide for it is believed every spar would have been taken out of them, before they could close. The exercise by which this high condition was produced, had been of the severest kind. The men had commenced, by being kept at the guns an hour, in violent exertion, when it was found that they were exhausted. The time was gradually extended, however, until the *Superior's* people have been known to come out of an exercise of several hours continuance, as fresh and as gay as if they had been at sport.

3000 embarked on the 19th, but another gale intervening, did not sail until the 21st. This force was landed at the mouth of the Genesee, on the 22d. As soon as this duty was performed, Commodore Chauncey went off Kingston again, where he appeared on the 28th. Two of the enemy's ships were coming out under a press of sail, most probably with troops to reinforce the army on the Niagara, but were driven back. The 29th, the wind being fair, the squadron looked into Kingston again, and the *Lady* was sent close in, when it was found that the large ship, which had been called the *St. Lawrence*, was completely rigged, but had no sails bent. As this vessel was pierced for 112 guns, and was intended for metal in proportion, she was more than equal to meeting the whole American force. On the 5th of October, the *Sylph* looked in again, and found her sails bent and topgallant yards crossed, when Commodore Chauncey ran over to the Harbour, where he anchored on the 7th, and prepared to receive an attack.

For some days, Sir James Yeo was confidently expected; and Commodore Chauncey moored his ships outside the point, under the fort, in readiness to receive him. With so little skill, however, had the works at this important post been planned, that there was no point where more than four guns at a time could be brought to bear on the enemy. This evil was in part repaired, and a reinforcement of troops shortly after arriving, under Major General Brown, all apprehensions ceased by the end of the month.

Sir James Yeo sailed in the *St. Lawrence*, with four other ships, two brigs, and a schooner, on the 15th of October, and he continued in command of the lake for the remainder of the season. He is said to have had more than 1100 men in his flag-ship; and it was understood that the enemy had become so wary, that a captain was stationed on each deck. Special duty probably occupied him, for no attempt was made on the Harbour, nor did the enemy even blockade it; the necessities of the Niagara frontier calling his attention in that quarter.

On the 19th of November, Mr. M'Gowan, a midshipman, accompanied by Mr. William Johnson, a celebrated partisan, went with a torpedo, to blow up the *St. Lawrence*, then supposed to be lying in Kingston. He was discovered by two of the enemy's boats, and found himself reduced to the necessity of capturing them. Having now as many prisoners as men of his own, and understanding that the ship was not in port, Mr. M'Gowan returned to the Harbour. At the end of the month the navigation closed.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Operations on Lake Champlain—Attempts of the British to fill up the channel of Otter Creek—Launch of the schooner *Eagle*—Sir George Prevost advances against Plattsburg—Disposition of the hostile forces—Battle of Plattsburg Bay—Promotion of Capt. M'Donough—medal from Congress, &c. &c.—Glorious character of the battle.

ALTHOUGH Lake Champlain had been the scene of so many important events, in the previous wars of the continent, the country had so far advanced as to render it, until near the close of 1814, of but little moment, in the present contest. By that time, large reinforcements had arrived in the Canadas, from Europe, and an army was collected in the vicinity of Montreal, that has been differently estimated to contain from ten to fifteen thousand men. With this force, the enemy now contemplated an invasion of the northern and least populous counties of New York, following the route laid down for General Burgoyne, in his unfortunate expedition of 1777. How far the English expected to penetrate, on this occasion, is still a matter of doubt, though Crown Point and Ticonderoga are thought to have been their aim, with a view to farther conquests in the spring. Some have imagined that they hoped to reach Albany, a measure that would have induced a total loss of their whole force; as double the number of men named could hardly have attempted such an enterprise with a rational prospect of success. It was most probably intended to occupy a portion of the northern frontier, with the expectation of turning the circumstance to account, in the pending negotiations, the English commissioners soon after advancing a claim to drive the Americans back from their ancient boundaries, with a view to leave Great Britain the entire possession of the lakes. In such an expedition, the command of Champlain became of great importance, as it flanked the march of the invading army for more than a hundred miles, and offered so many facilities for forwarding supplies, as well as for annoyance and defence. Until this season, neither nation had a force of any moment on that water, but the Americans had built a ship and a schooner, during the winter and spring; and when it was found that the enemy was preparing for a serious effort, the keel of a brig was laid. Many galleys, or gun-boats, were also constructed.

The American squadron lay in Otter Creek, at the commencement of the season, and near the middle of May, as the vessels then launched were about to quit port, the enemy appeared off the mouth of the creek, with a force consisting of the *Linnet* brig, and eight or ten galleys under the orders of Captain Pring, with a view to fill the channel. For this purpose two sloops loaded with stones were in company. A small work had been thrown up at the mouth of the creek some time previously, by Captain Thornton of the artillery, and Lieutenant Cassin was despatched with a party of seamen, to aid that officer in defending the pass. After a cannonading of some duration, the enemy retired without effecting his object, and the ves-

sels got out. In this affair, no one was hurt on the side of the Americans, although shells were thrown from one of the galleys.

On the other hand, the English were not idle. In addition to the small vessels they had possessed the previous year, they had built the brig just mentioned, or the *Linnet*, and as soon as the last American vessel was in frame, they laid the keel of a ship. By constructing the latter, a great advantage was secured, care being taken, as a matter of course, to make her of a size sufficient to be certain of possessing the greatest force. The American brig, which was called the *Eagle*, was launched about the middle of August; and the English ship, which was named the *Confiance*, on the 25th of the same month. As the English army was already collecting on the frontier, the utmost exertions were now made by both sides, and each appeared on the lake as it got ready. Captain M'Donough, who still commanded the American force, was enabled to get out a few days before his adversary; and cruising being almost out of the question on this long and narrow body of water, he advanced as far as Plattsburg, the point selected for defence, and anchored, the 3d of September, on the flank of the troops which occupied the entrenchments at that place.

About this time, Sir George Prevost, the English commander-in-chief, advanced against Plattsburg, then held by Brigadier General Macomb, at the head of only 1500 effectives, with a force that probably amounted to 12,000 men. The English army was divided into four brigades, which were led by Lieutenant General de Rottenburg, Majors General Brisbane, Power, and Robinson; Major General Baynes doing the duty of Adjutant General. With this formidable force, Sir George Prevost advanced slowly, waiting for the flotilla to get ready, and to appear on his left flank. A good deal of skirmishing ensued, and from the 7th to the 11th, the enemy was employed in bringing up his battering train, stores, and reinforcements. Captain Downie, late of the Montreal, on Lake Ontario, had been sent by Sir James Yeo, to command on this lake. It has been said that he was hurried into action by the pressing solicitations of the Governor-General, but in the course of a newspaper controversy that succeeded, the latter caused a letter of the commanding naval officer to be published, in which Captain Downie, but a few days before the conflict, announced his determination not to go out until his vessels were ready. In one sense, certainly, neither squadron was in a very prepared state, the largest English vessel having been in the water but 16 days, when it was brought into action; and the second vessel in size of the Americans but 30 days. In point of fact, the *Eagle* was ready for service but 8 days before the *Confiance*. As these vessels, however, had little need of stores, and the action that ensued was fought at anchor, they were, in truth, a species of floating batteries.

On the 6th, Captain M'Donough ordered the galleys to the head of the bay, to annoy the English army, and a cannonading occurred which lasted two hours. The wind coming on to blow a gale that menaced the galleys with shipwreck, Mr. Duncan, a midshipman of the *Saratoga*, was sent in a gig to order them to retire. It is sup-

posed that the appearance of the boat induced the enemy to think that Captain M'Donough himself, had joined his galleys, for he concentrated a fire on the galley Mr. Duncan was in, and that young officer received a severe wound, by which he lost the use of his arm. Afterwards one of the galleys drifted in, under the guns of the enemy, and she also sustained some loss, but was eventually brought off.

The general direction of Lake Champlain is north and south, but at the point called Cumberland Head, in coming south, the land bends north again, forming Plattsburg Bay, which is a deep indentation of the shore, that leaves a basin open to the southward, and which, in form, consequently lies nearly parallel to the main lake. The eastern side of this bay is protected by the long narrow bit of land that terminates in the Head. Its bottom, or northern end, and its western shore, are encircled by the main, while to the southward and eastward is the entrance. Near the centre of the western shore the Saranac empties into the bay, and on both its banks, stands the village of Plattsburg. About half a league from the Head, in a southwesterly direction, and quite near the western shore, is an extensive shoal, and a small low island, which commands the approach to the bay in that direction. At this spot, which is called Crab Island, the naval hospital was established, and a small battery of one gun had been erected.

Captain M'Donough had chosen an anchorage a little to the south of the outlet of the Saranac. His vessels lay in a line parallel to the coast, extending north and south, and distant from the western shore near two miles. The last vessel at the southward was so near the shoal, as to prevent the English from passing that end of the line, while all the ships lay so far out towards Cumberland Head, as to bring the enemy within reach of carronades, should he enter the bay on that side. The Eagle, Captain Henley, lay at the northern extremity of the American line, and what might, during the battle, have been called its head, the wind being at the northward and eastward; the Saratoga, Captain M'Donough's own vessel, was second; the Ticonderoga, Lieutenant Commandant Cassin, third; and the Preble, Lieutenant Charles Budd, last. The Preble lay a little farther south than the pitch of Cumberland Head. The first of these vessels just mentioned was a brig of 20 guns, and 150 men, all told; the second a ship of 26 guns, and 212 men; the third a schooner of 17 guns and 110 men; the last a sloop, or cutter, of 7 guns and 30 men. The metal of all these vessels, as well as those of the enemy, was unusually heavy, there being no swell in the lake to render it dangerous. The Saratoga mounted 8 long twenty-fours, 6 forty-two, and 12 thirty-two-pound carronades; the Eagle 8 long eighteens, and 12 thirty-two-pound carronades; the Ticonderoga 4 long eighteens, 8 long twelves, and 4 thirty-two-pound carronades, and one eighteen-pound columbiad; the Preble 7 long nines. In addition to these four vessels, the Americans had 10 galleys, or gunboats, six large and four small. Each of the former mounted a long twenty-four, and an eighteen pound columbiad; each of the latter one long twelve. The galleys, on an average, had about 35 men each. The total force of the Americans present consisted, conse-

quently, of 14 vessels, mounting 86 guns, and containing about 850 men, including officers, and a small detachment of soldiers, who did duty as marines, none of the corps having been sent on Lake Champlain. To complete his order of battle, Captain M'Donough directed two of the galleys to keep in shore of the Eagle, and a little to windward of her, to sustain the head of the line; one or two more to lie opposite to the interval between the Eagle and Saratoga; a few opposite to the interval between the Saratoga and Ticonderoga; and two or three opposite the interval between the Ticonderoga and Preble. If any order had been given to cover the rear of the line in the same manner, it was not obeyed.

The Americans were, consequently, formed in two lines, distant from each other about 40 yards; the large vessels at anchor, and the galleys under their sweeps. Owing to the latter circumstance, the inner line soon got to be very irregular, however, some of the galleys pressing boldly forward, while others were less impelled by the ardour of their commanders.

The force of the enemy was materially greater than that of the Americans. His largest vessel, the *Confiance*, commanded by Captain Downie in person, had the gun-deck of a heavy frigate, mounting on it an armament similar to that of the *Constitution*, or *United States*, or 30 long twenty-fours. She had no spar-deck, but there was a spacious topgallant fore-castle, and a poop that came no farther forward than the mizen-mast. On the first were a long twenty-four on a circle, and 4 heavy carronades; and on the last 2 heavy carronades, making an armament of 37 guns in all.* Her complement of men is supposed to have been considerably more than 300. The next vessel of the enemy was the *Linnet*, Captain Pring, a brig of 16 long twelves with a crew of about 100 men. There were two sloops, the *Chubb*, Lieutenant M'Ghee, and the *Finch*, Lieutenant Hicks, the former carrying 10 eighteen-pound carronades and 1 long six, and the latter 6 eighteen-pound carronades, 1 eighteen-pound columbiad, and 4 long sixes. Each of these sloops had about 40 men. To these four vessels were added a force in galleys, or gun-boats, which Sir George Prevost, in his published accounts, states at twelve in number, and Captain M'Donough at thirteen. These vessels were similarly constructed to the American galleys, eight mounting two, and the remainder but one gun each. Thus the whole force of Captain Downie consisted of sixteen or seventeen vessels, as the case may have been, mounting in all, 95 or 96 guns, and carrying about 1000 men.

On the 3d of September, the British gun-boats sailed from Isle aux Noix, under the orders of Captain Pring, to cover the left flank of their army, then marching on Plattsburg, and on the 4th that offi-

*This statement is different from the published account of Captain M'Donough, who made the force of the *Confiance* 39 guns, of calibers varying a little from those given here. There were 39 guns on board the *Confiance*, but two of them were not mounted, or intended to be mounted. Captain M'Donough's report was probably made on the representation of some one who had not properly examined the English ship. That given here is taken from an officer who was on board the *Confiance* within ten minutes after the *Linnet* struck, and who was in charge of her for two months.

cer took possession of Isle au Motte, where he constructed a battery, and landed some supplies for the troops. On the 8th, the four large vessels arrived under Captain Downie, but remained at anchor until the 11th, waiting to receive some necessaries. At daylight, on the morning just mentioned, the whole force weighed, and moved forward in a body.

The guard-boat of the Americans pulled in shortly after the sun had risen, and announced the approach of the enemy. As the wind was fair, a good working breeze at the northward and eastward, Captain M'Donough ordered the vessels cleared, and preparations made to fight at anchor. Eight bells were striking in the American squadron, as the upper sails of the English vessels were seen passing along the land, in the main lake, on their way to double Cumberland Head, in order to enter the bay. The enemy had the wind rather on his larboard quarter, the booms of his cutters swinging out to starboard. The Finch led, succeeded by the *Confiance*, *Linnet*, and *Chubb*, while the gun-boats, all of which, as well as those of the Americans, had two latine sails, followed without much order, keeping just clear of the shore.

The first vessel that came round the Head was a sloop, which is said to have carried a company of amateurs, and which took no part in the engagement. She kept well to leeward, and stood down towards Crab Island, and was soon unobserved.* The Finch came next, and soon after the other large vessels of the enemy opened from behind the land, and hauled up to the wind in a line abreast, lying-to until their galleys could join. The latter passed to leeward, and formed in the same manner as their consorts. The two squadrons were now in plain view of each other, distant about a league. As soon as the gun-boats were in their stations, and the different commanders had received their orders, the English filled, with their starboard tacks aboard, and headed in towards the American vessels, in a line abreast, the *Chubb* to windward, and the Finch to leeward, most of the gun-boats, however, being to leeward of the latter. The movements of the Finch had been a little singular ever since she led round the Head, for she is said not to have hove-to, but to have run off, half way to Crab Island, with the wind abeam, then to have tacked and got into her station, after the other vessels had filled. This movement was probably intended to reconnoitre, or to menace the rear of the Americans. The enemy was now standing in, close-hauled, the *Chubb* looking well to windward of the *Eagle*, the vessel that lay at the head of the American line, the *Linnet* laying her course for the bows of the same brig, the *Confiance* intending to fetch far enough ahead of the *Saratoga* to lay that ship athwart hawse, and the Finch, with the gun-boats, standing for the *Ticonderoga* and *Preble*.

Captain M'Donough had taken his anchorage with the eye of a

* As the character of this vessel was not at first known, it is not impossible that Captain M'Donough mistook her for one of the gun-boats, more especially as she is said to have subsequently fled with them, which would account for the fact of his stating the latter at one more than Sir George Prevost, who doubtless had an accurate knowledge of Captain Downie's force.

seaman. As has been mentioned, his line could not be doubled, on account of the shoal ; there was not room to anchor on his broadside out of reach of the carronades, that formed so large a portion of his armaments ; and in order to close, it was necessary, let the wind blow as it might, to stand in upon his vessels, bows on. Though the latter was an experiment not to be rashly attempted, the English, accustomed to see it succeed in their European conflicts, did not hesitate to adopt it, on this occasion, most probably presuming on their knowledge of the large proportion of short guns, in the vessels of their adversaries.

As a matter of course, the Americans were anchored with springs. But not content with this customary arrangement, Captain M'Donough had laid a kedge broad off on each bow of the *Saratoga*, and brought their hawsers in, upon the two quarters, letting them hang in bights, under water. This timely precaution gained the victory.

As the enemy filled, the American vessels sprung their broadsides to bear, and a few minutes passed in the solemn and silent expectation, that, in a disciplined ship, always precedes a battle. Suddenly the *Eagle* discharged, in quick succession, the four long eighteens in broadside. In clearing the decks of the *Saratoga*, some hen-coops were thrown overboard, and the poultry had been permitted to run at large. Startled by the reports of the guns, a young cock flew upon a gun slide, clapped his wings and crowed. At this animated sound, the men spontaneously gave three cheers. This little occurrence relieved the usual breathing time, between preparation and the combat, and it had a powerful influence on the known tendencies of the seamen. Still Captain M'Donough did not give the order to commence, although the enemy's galleys now opened, for it was apparent that the fire of the *Eagle*, which vessel continued to engage, was useless. As soon, however, as it was seen that her shot told, Captain M'Donough, himself, sighted a long twenty-four, and the gun was fired. This shot is said to have struck the *Confiance* near the outer hawsehole, and to have passed the length of her deck, killing and wounding several men, and carrying away the wheel. It was a signal for all the American long guns to open, and it was soon seen that the English commanding ship, in particular, was suffering heavily. Still the enemy advanced steadily, and in the most gallant manner, confident if he could get the desired position with his vessels, that the great weight of the *Confiance* would at once decide the fate of the day. But he had miscalculated his own powers of endurance, and not improbably those of annoyance possessed by the Americans. The anchors of the *Confiance* were hanging by the stoppers, in readiness to let go, and the larboard bower was soon cut away, as well as a spare anchor in the larboard fore-chains. In short, after bearing the fire of the American vessels as long as possible, and the wind beginning to baffle, Captain Downie found himself reduced to the necessity of anchoring while still at the distance of about a quarter of a mile from the American line. The helm was put a-port, the ship shot into the wind, and a kedge was let go, while the vessel took

a sheer, and brought up with her starboard bower. In doing the latter, however, the kedje was fouled and became of little use. In coming to, the halyards were let run, and the ship hauled up her courses. At this time the Linnet and Chubb were still standing in, farther to windward, and the former, as her guns bore, fired a broadside at the Saratoga. The Linnet soon after anchored, somewhat nearer than the Confiance, getting a very favourable position forward of the Eagle's beam. The Chubb kept under way, intending, if possible, to rake the American line. The Finch got abreast of the Ticonderoga, under her sweeps, supported by the gun-boats.

The English vessels came to in very handsome style, nor did the Confiance fire a single gun until secured, although the entire American line was now engaged with all its force. As soon as Captain Downie had performed this duty, in a seaman-like manner, his ship appeared a sheet of fire, discharging all her guns at nearly the same instant, pointed principally at the Saratoga. The effect of a broadside, thrown from 16 long twenty-fours, double shotted, in perfectly smooth water, with guns levelled to point-blank range, and coolly sighted, was terrible in the little ship that received it. After the crash had subsided, Captain M'Donough saw that near half his crew was on the deck, for many had been knocked down who sustained no real injuries. It is supposed, however, that about 40 men, or near one-fifth of her complement, were killed and wounded on board the Saratoga, by this single discharge. The hatches had been fastened down, as usual, but the bodies so cumbered the deck, that it was found necessary to remove the fastenings and to pass them below. The effect continued but a moment, when the ship resumed her fire as gallantly as ever. Among the slain, however, was Mr. Peter Gamble, the first lieutenant.* By this early loss, but one officer of that rank, Acting Lieutenant Vallette, was left in the Saratoga.

On the part of the principal vessels, the battle now became a steady, animated, but as guns were injured, a gradually decreasing cannonade. Still the character of the battle was relieved by several little incidents that merit notice. The Chubb, while manœuvring near the head of the American line, received a broadside from the Eagle that crippled her, and she drifted down between the opposing vessels, until near the Saratoga, which ship fired a shot into her, and she immediately struck. Mr. Platt, one of the Saratoga's midshipmen, was sent with a boat to take possession. This young officer threw the prize a line, and towed her down astern of the Saratoga, and in-shore, anchoring her near the mouth of the Saranac. This little success occurred within a quarter of an hour after the enemy had anchored, and was considered a favourable omen, though all well knew that on the Confiance alone depended the fate of the day.

* This young officer was on his knees sighting the bow gun, when a shot entered the port, split the quoin, drove a portion of it against his breast, and laid him dead on the deck without breaking his skin. Fifteen minutes later, one of the American shot struck the muzzle of a twenty-four, on board the Confiance, dismounted it, sending it bodily in-board, against the groin of Captain Downie, killing him, also, without breaking the skin.

The Chubb had suffered materially, nearly half of her people having been killed and wounded.*

About an hour later, the Finch was also driven out of her berth, by the Ticonderoga, and being crippled, she drifted down upon Crab Island Shoal, where, receiving a shot or two from the gun mounted in the battery, she struck, and was taken possession of by the invalids belonging to the hospital. At this end of the line, the British galleys early made several desperate efforts to close, and soon after the Finch had drifted away, they forced the Preble out of the American line, that vessel cutting her cable, and shifting her anchorage to a station considerably in-shore, where she was of no more service throughout the day. The rear of the American line was certainly its weakest point; and having compelled the little Preble to retreat, the enemy's galleys were emboldened to renew their efforts against the vessel ahead of her, which was the Ticonderoga. This schooner, however, was better able to resist them, and she was very nobly fought. Her spirited commander, Lieutenant Commandant Cassin, walked the taffrail, where he could watch the movements of the enemy's galleys, amidst showers of canister and grape, directing discharges of bags of musket-balls, and other light missiles, effectually keeping the British at bay. Several times the English galleys, of which many were very gallantly fought, closed quite near, with an intent to board, but the great steadiness on board the Ticonderoga beat them back, and completely covered the rear of the line for the remainder of the day. So desperate were some of the assaults, notwithstanding, that the galleys have been described as several times getting nearly within a boat-hook's length of the schooner, and their people as rising from the sweeps in readiness to spring.

While these reverses and successes were occurring in the rear of the two lines, the Americans were suffering heavily at the other extremity. The Linnet had got a very commanding position, and she was very admirably fought; while the Eagle, which received all her fire, and part of that of the Confiante, having lost her springs, found herself so situated, as not to be able to bring her guns fairly to bear on either of the enemy's vessels. Captain Henley had run his top-sail-yards, with the sails stopped, to the mast-heads, previously to engaging, and he now cut his cable, sheeted home his topsails, cast the brig, and running down, anchored by the stern, between the Saratoga and Ticonderoga, necessarily a little in-shore of both. Here he opened afresh, and with better effect, on the Confiante and galleys, using his larboard guns. But this movement left the Saratoga exposed to nearly the whole fire of the Linnet, which brig now sprung her broadside in a manner to rake the American ship on her bows.

Shortly after this important change had occurred at the head of the lines, the fire of the two ships began materially to lessen, as gun after gun became disabled; the Saratoga, in particular, having had

*Mr. Platt was employed in a boat more than once on that day. While thus engaged a twenty-four-pound shot passed through his boat, which was only kept from sinking by sitting on the gunwale.

all her long pieces rendered useless by shot, while most of the carronades were dismounted, either in the same manner, or in consequence of a disposition in the men to overcharge them.* At length but a single carronade remained in the starboard batteries, and on firing it, the navel-bolt broke, the gun flew off the carriage, and it actually fell down the main hatch. By this accident, the American commanding ship was left in the middle of the battle, without a single available gun. Nothing remained, but to make an immediate attempt to wind the ship.

The stream anchor was suspended astern, and it was let go accordingly. The men then clapped on the hawser that led to the starboard quarter, and brought the ship's stern up over the kedge, but here she hung, there not being sufficient wind or current, to force her bows round. A line had been bent to a bight in the stream cable, with a view to help wind the ship, and she now rode by the kedge and this line, with her stern under the raking broadside of the Linnet, which brig kept up a steady and well-directed fire. The larboard batteries having been manned and got ready, Captain M'Donough ordered all the men from the guns, where they were uselessly suffering, telling them to go forward. By rowing on the line, the ship was at length got so far round, that the aftermost gun would bear on the Confidence, when it was instantly manned, and began to play. The next gun was used in the same manner, but it was soon apparent that the ship could be got no farther round, for she was now nearly end-on to the wind. At this critical moment, Mr. Brum, the master, bethought him of the hawser that had led to the larboard quarter. It was got forward under the bows, and passed aft to the starboard quarter, when the ship's stern was immediately sprung to the westward, so as to bring all her larboard guns to bear on the English ship, with fatal effect.

As soon as the preparations were made to wind the Saratoga, the Confidence attempted to perform the same evolution. Her springs were hauled on, but they merely forced the ship ahead, and having borne the fresh broadside of the Americans, until she had scarcely a gun with which to return the fire, and failing in all her efforts to get round, about two hours and a quarter after the commencement of the action, her commanding officer lowered his flag.† By hauling

* The want of officers was greatly felt in this particular. In some instances the seamen would put two round shot, and two stand of grape, into a carronade, the end of the last stand sticking out of the muzzle. In consequence of this mistaken zeal, much less execution was done, besides crippling the heated guns, the enemy's sides being found full of shot that had lodged. This is the very same mistake as that made by the people of the Lawrence, in the battle of Lake Erie.

† It has been pretendingly said, that all the English had to do, in these circumstances, was to cut their cable and ride by the spring. This is of the partisan and superficial character of a great deal more that has been advanced, with a view to place one particular achievement of the navy, not only above every thing else that has been done by the service, but above every thing that has been done by all other services!

Had the Confidence cut her cable, and swung to her spring, she would have of course tended to the wind, and that being to the northward and eastward, she would have headed nearly diagonally towards the American line. As the Eagle and Ticonderoga both lay to the southward and westward of her, and, at that moment, had little else to do, they must have raked her. It has been seen that when the Eagle lost her spring, she could not bring her guns properly to bear; nor could any vessel have been well fought,

again upon the starboard hawser, the *Saratoga's* broadside was immediately sprung to bear on the *Linnet*, which brig struck in about fifteen minutes after her consort. The enemy's galleys had been driven back, nearly or quite half a mile, and they lay irregularly scattered, and setting to leeward, keeping up a desultory firing. As soon as they found that the large vessels had submitted, they ceased the combat, and lowered their colours. At this proud moment, it is believed, on authority entitled to the highest respect, there was not a single English ensign, out of the sixteen or seventeen that had so lately been flying, left abroad in the bay!

In this long and bloody conflict, the *Saratoga* had 28 men killed, and 29 wounded, or more than a fourth of all on board her; the *Eagle* 13 killed, and 20 wounded, which was sustaining a loss in nearly an equal proportion; the *Ticonderoga* 6 killed, and 6 wounded; the *Preble* 2 killed; while on board the 10 galleys, only 3 were killed, and 3 wounded. The *Saratoga* was hulled fifty-five times, principally by twenty-four-pound shot; and the *Eagle* thirty-nine times. After the first broadside of the *Confiance*, the fire of that ship became much less destructive, the shot passing higher at each successive discharge. Nearly all the hammocks were cut to pieces in the *Saratoga's* netting, at the second broadside; and it was seen as the battle advanced, that the shot cut the standing rigging farther from the deck. Few persons were hurt by any thing but grape, or by the shot of the *Linnet*,* after the first fire.

According to the report of Captain Pring, of the *Linnet*, dated on the 12th of September, the *Confiance* lost 41 killed, and 40 wounded. It was admitted, however, that no good opportunity had then existed to ascertain the casualties. At a later day, the English themselves enumerated her wounded at 83. This would make the total loss of that ship 124; but even this number is supposed to be materially short of the truth. The *Linnet* is reported to have had 10 killed, and 14 wounded. This loss is also believed to be considerably below the fact. The *Chubb* had 6 killed, and 10 wounded. The *Finch* was reported by the enemy, to have had but 2 men wounded. No American official report of the casualties in the English vessels has been published, but by an estimate made on the best data that could be found, the *Linnet* was thought to have lost 50 men, and the two

at anchor, that day, without a spring, in the positions occupied by the two squadrons. The *Confiance* did not let go her kedge in the place that was intended; but it was of so much use that it kept her broadside square with the American line, though it would not suffice to wind her, under fire.

It was an advantage possessed by the English, in the Battle of Plattsburg Bay, that *their* springs were on their off sides, and in a great measure protected from shot by the hulls of their vessels.

* On inquiring into a circumstance so curious, when the ships lay at the same distance and in smooth water, the American officers came to the conclusion that the enemy had levelled his guns to point-blank range, previously to engaging, and that as the quoins were loosened at each discharge, they were not properly replaced. There is no question that the fire of the Americans produced a great impression on board the *Confiance*, and that while making the abortive attempt to wind, that ship was in great confusion. After the battle, the charges of her guns were drawn, and on the side she had fought, one gun was found with a canvass bag holding two round shot, rammed home and wadded, without any powder; another with two cartridges and no shot; and a third with a wad below the cartridge.



BATTLE OF PLATTSBURG BAY.

The distances are not correct, the intention being to give an idea of the position of the vessels.



smaller vessels taken, about 30 between them. No account, whatever has been published of the casualties on board the English galleys, though the slaughter in them is believed to have been very heavy. An impression has prevailed with the public, that these galleys did not support their commander, but in the American fleet, they were thought to have behaved with great gallantry, and to have fully sustained their share of the battle. They are also believed to have suffered in a just proportion, from the fire of the Ticonderoga, in particular.

As soon as the Linnet struck, a lieutenant was sent to take possession of the *Confiance*. Bad as was the situation of the *Saratoga*, that of this prize was much worse. She had been hulled 105 times; had probably near, if not quite, half her people killed and wounded; and this formidable floating battery was reduced to helpless impotency. She had not been surrendered a moment too soon.

As the boarding officer was passing along the deck of the prize, he accidentally ran against a lock-string, and fired one of the *Confiance*'s starboard guns, which sent its shot in the direction of Cumberland Head. Up to this moment, the English galleys had been slowly drifting to leeward, with their colours down, apparently waiting to be taken possession of; but at the discharge of this gun, which may have been understood as a signal, one or two of them began to move slowly off, and soon after the others followed, pulling but a very few sweeps. It is not known that one of them hoisted her ensign. Captain M'Donough made a signal for the American galleys to follow, but it was discovered that their men were wanted at the pumps of some of the larger vessels, to keep them from sinking, the water being found over the berth-deck of the Linnet, and the signal was revoked. As there was not a mast that would bear any canvass among all the larger vessels, the English galleys escaped, though they went off slowly and irregularly, as if distrusting their own liberty.

Captain M'Donough applauded the conduct of all the officers of the *Saratoga*. Mr. Gamble died at his post, fighting bravely; Mr. Vallette, the only lieutenant left, displayed the cool discretion that marks the character of this highly respectable and firm officer;* and Mr. Brum, the master, who was entrusted with the important duty of winding the ship, never lost his self-possession for an instant. Captain Hopley praised the conduct of his officers, as did Lieutenant Commandant Cassin. The galleys behaved very unequally, but the Borer, Mr. Conover;† Netley, Mr. Breese;‡ those under the orders of Mr. Robins and Mr. Stellwagen, masters; and one other, were considered to have been very gallantly handled.

There was a common feeling of admiration at the manner in which the *Ticonderoga*, Lieutenant Commandant Cassin, defended the rear of the line, and at the noble conduct of all on board her. Once or twice the nearest vessels thought that schooner in flames, in consequence of the awful rapidity of her fire.

The *Saratoga* was twice on fire by hot shot thrown from the *Confiance*, her spanker having been nearly consumed. This fact has

* Since Commodore Lavalette.

† Since Captain Conover.

‡ Since Captain Breese.

been denied, or the shot attributed to the batteries on the shore; but never by any respectable authority. No battery from the American shore, with the exception of the gun or two fired at the Finch from Crabb Island, took any part in the naval encounter; nor could any, without endangering the American vessels equally with the enemy. Indeed the distance renders it questionable whether shot would have reached with effect, as Captain M'Donough had anchored far off the land, in order to compel the enemy to come within range of his short guns.

The Americans found a furnace on board the *Confiance*, with eight or ten heated shot in it, though the fact is not stated with any view to attribute it to the enemy as a fault. It was an advantage that he possessed, most probably, in consequence of the presence of a party of artillerists.

Captain M'Donough, who was already very favourably known to the service, for his personal intrepidity, obtained a vast accession of reputation, by the results of this day. His dispositions for receiving the attack, were highly judicious and seaman-like. By the manner in which he anchored his vessels, with the shoal so near the rear of his line as to cover that extremity, and the land of Cumberland Head so near his broadside as necessarily to bring the enemy within reach of his short guns, he completely made all his force available. The English were not near enough, perhaps, to give to carronades their full effect, but this disadvantage was unavoidable, the assailing party having, of course, some choice in the distance. All that could be obtained, under the circumstances, appears to have been secured, and the result proved the wisdom of the actual arrangement. The personal deportment of Captain M'Donough in this engagement, like that of Captain Perry in the battle of Lake Erie, was the subject of general admiration in his little squadron. His coolness was undisturbed throughout all the trying scenes on board his own ship, and although lying against a vessel of double the force, and nearly double the tonnage of the *Saratoga*, he met and resisted her attack with a constancy that seemed to set defeat at defiance. The winding of the *Saratoga*, under such circumstances, exposed as she was to the raking broadsides of the *Confiance* and *Linnet*, especially the latter, was a bold, seaman-like, and masterly measure, that required unusual decision and fortitude to imagine and execute. Most men would have believed that, without a single gun on the side engaged, a fourth of their people cut down, and their ship a wreck, enough injury had been received to justify submission; but Captain M'Donough found the means to secure a victory in the desperate condition of his own ship.

The deportment of Lieutenant Commandant Cassin* was also the subject of general applause in the American squadron.

Although the personal conduct of Captain Downie, and the gallantry of his attack, were beyond censure, the prudence and nautical merits of his mode of approach have been very justly questioned. The *Confiance* had been built in a time so short, and by exertions so great, as to put it out of the power of the Americans to construct a vessel

*Since Commodore Cassin.

to meet her in sufficient season to obviate the expected consequences, and it would be accusing the enemy of total imbecility, to suppose, that after the known results of so many combats, he had not made his vessel of ample force to ensure the victory. Few professional judges will deny that a ship with the gun-deck dimensions, metal, and battery of a forty-four, ought to have been fully equal, at least, to contending with two such vessels as the *Saratoga* and *Eagle*, which would be at once attributing to the enemy a material superiority of force. The plan of the campaign that was destroyed by this defeat, the high objects in view, the fact that the English were the assailants, and that they could not but know the force they were to attack, together with all the other attendant circumstances, are so many assurances that the battle of Plattsburg Bay was fought on the part of the enemy, with a confidence of victory that was only justified by this known advantage. The very name given to their largest ship, was a pledge to this effect. Sir James Yeo, whose command extended to this lake, complained to his superior officer, that Captain Downie had been hurried into action by the Governor-General unprepared, but he did not complain of an insufficiency of force, which would infer a grave fault in all connected with the previous arrangements. That Captain Downie went into action before his own crew and vessel had been long subject to drill and preparation, is true; and Captain M'Donough was labouring equally under the same disadvantage. These are incidents peculiar to sudden enterprises, and must be met by the resources of seamen. The *Constitution* took the *Guerriere* with a crew that had been acting together but little more than a month, and she was manœuvring before the squadron off New York, a much more delicate exploit, within five days of the time that a large proportion of her people had joined her! Captain Downie's professional character, as well as his declarations, as they have been published to the world, are sufficient guarantees that he deemed the *Confiance* ready to meet the enemy. Sir James Yeo, with great reason, complained that this officer had stood into the bay to make his attack, a step that brought him under a raking fire, and which, no doubt, materially contributed to the loss of the day. In short, Captain Downie made an attempt to lead into the hostile squadron bows on, a measure that the English had often practised in Europe with comparative impunity, but which was an experiment imminently hazardous to make under the guns of an American man-of-war. Still his bearing was highly gallant; the weatherly position he obtained was much in his favour; and judging from the force of his own vessel, could he have got the berth he aimed at, there is great reason to think he would have succeeded. That he was foiled, must be attributed to the immovable steadiness, cool deliberation, and admirable fire of the assailed.

Although many of the American officers were wounded, but two that belonged to the quarter-deck were killed. These were Mr Gamble, the first lieutenant of the *Saratoga*, and Mr. Stansbury,* the

* The manner in which Mr. Gamble met his death, has been mentioned. Mr. Stansbury suddenly disappeared from the bulwarks forward, while superintending some duty

first lieutenant of the *Ticonderoga*. Mr. Smith,* a very valuable officer, and the first lieutenant of the *Eagle*, received a severe wound, but returned to his quarters during the action. On the part of the enemy, besides Captain Downie, several officers were killed, and three or four were wounded.

Captain M'Donough, besides the usual medal from Congress, and various compliments and gifts from different states and towns, was promoted for his services. The legislature of Vermont presented him also with a small estate on Cumberland Head, which overlooked the scene of his triumph. The officers and crews met with the customary acknowledgments, and the country generally placed the victory by the side of that of Lake Erie. In the navy, which is better qualified to enter into just estimates of force, and all the other circumstances that enhance the merits of nautical exploits, the battle of Plattsburg Bay is justly placed among the very highest of its claims to glory.

The consequences of this victory were immediate and important. During the action, Sir George Prevost had skirmished in front of the American works, and was busy in making demonstrations for a more serious attack. As soon, however, as the fate of the British squadron was ascertained, he made a precipitate and unmilitary retreat, abandoning much of his heavy artillery, stores, and supplies, and from that moment to the end of the war, the northern frontier was cleared of the enemy.

with the springs. Two days after the action, his body rose to the surface of the water, near the vessel to which he had belonged, and it was found that it had been cut in two by a round shot. Both these gentlemen showed great coolness and spirit, until they fell. Many officers were knocked down in the engagement, without having blood drawn. At one moment, there was a cry in the *Saratoga* that Captain M'Donough, or as he was usually called, the commodore, was killed. He was lying on his face, on the quarter deck, nearly if not quite senseless; and it was two or three minutes before he came to his recollection. He pointed a favourite gun most of the action, and while standing in the middle of the deck bending his body to sight it, a shot had cut in two the spanker-boom, letting the spar fall on his back, a blow that might easily have proved fatal. A few minutes after this accident, the cry that the commodore was killed was heard again. This time, Captain M'Donough was lying on the off side of the deck, between two of the guns, covered with blood, and again nearly senseless. A shot had driven the head of the captain of his favourite gun in upon him, and knocked him into the scuppers. Mr. Brum the master, a venerable old seaman, while winding the ship, had a large splinter driven so near his body, as actually to strip off his clothes. For a minute he was thought to be dead, but, on gaining his feet, he made an apron of his pocket handkerchief, and coolly went to work again with the springs! A few months later this veteran died, as is thought of the injury. Mr. Vallette had a shot-box, on which he was standing, knocked from under his feet, and he too, was once knocked down by the head of a seaman. In short, very few escaped altogether, and in this desperate fight, it appears to have been agreed on both sides, to call no man wounded who could keep out of the hospital. Many who were not included among the wounded, feel the effects of their hurts to this day. It is said, that scarcely an individual escaped on board of either the *Confiance* or *Saratoga*, without some injury.

*Since Commodore Smith.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Operations on the upper Lakes—Com. Sinclair repulsed in his attempt on Michilimackinac—The Ohio and Somers surprised and captured by the British—The Tigress and Scorpion taken by surprise—Notice of Henry Eckford—Resources and successes of the American and British forces on the Lakes.

AFTER the success of Captain Perry on Lake Erie, the English made no serious effort to recover the ascendancy on the upper waters. During the winter of 1813-14, they are believed to have contemplated an attempt against a portion of the American vessels, which were lying at Put-in-Bay, but the enterprise was abandoned. When Commodore Sinclair hoisted his pennant, as commander on this station, an expedition sailed against Michilimackinac, which was repulsed. He made some captures of vessels belonging to the Northwest Company, blew up a block-house in the Nautauwassauga, and compelled the enemy to destroy a schooner, called the Nancy, commanded by Lieutenant Worsley.

While these movements were in the course of occurrence in Lakes Superior and Huron, several of the small vessels were kept at the foot of Lake Erie, to co-operate with the army then besieged at the fort of the same name. On the night of the 12th of August, the Somers, Ohio, and Porcupine, all of which were under Lieutenant Conklin, were anchored just at the outlet of the lake, to cover the left flank of the American works. The enemy brought up a party of seamen from below, with a view to cut them off, and about midnight he made an attack, under Captain Dobbs, in six or eight boats, most of which were large batteaux. The Ohio and Somers were surprised, the last being captured without any resistance, but the Porcupine taking the alarm, easily effected her escape. The enemy drifted down the rapids with their two prizes, and secured them below.

In this sudden and handsome affair, the Americans had 1 man killed and 10 wounded. The enemy lost about the same number, by the resistance on board the Ohio, among whom was Lieutenant Radcliffe, of the Netley, slain. The Porcupine had no part in the action. This surprise was the result of excess of confidence, it being thought that the enemy had no force on Lake Erie with which to make such an attack. The manner in which the men and boats were brought up from Lake Ontario, for this purpose, and the neatness with which the enterprise was executed, reflected great credit on all concerned.

Nor was this the only successful attempt of the same nature, made by the English on the upper lakes, during this season. Lieutenant Worsley, the officer who commanded the schooner destroyed by Commodore Sinclair, had escaped with all his men, and obtaining a party of soldiers from Michilimackinac, and a strong body of Indians, he planned a surprise upon the Tigress and Scorpion, two schooners

that had been left in Lake Huron after the repulse on the post just mentioned. The *Tigress* mounted a twenty-four, had a crew of 28 men, officers included, and was commanded by Mr. Champlin. She was lying at St. Joseph's, on the night of the 3d of September, when Mr. Worsley made his attack in five large boats, one of which mounted a six, and another a three-pounder, accompanied by nineteen canoes, containing more than 200 men. The night was so dark that the enemy got very near before they were discovered, but Mr. Champlin* and his officers made a very gallant resistance. The schooner was not captured until all her officers had been shot down. The guns of the enemy were transferred to the *Tigress*, and while she still continued in her berth, the evening of the next day, the *Scorpion*, Lieutenant Turner, which had been cruising, came in and anchored about five miles from her. Neither vessel had signals, and there was no attempt to communicate that night. The next morning, at daylight, the *Tigress* was seen standing down towards the *Scorpion*, with American colours flying, and there not being the slightest apparent motive to suspect her change of character, she was permitted to come close alongside, when she fired all her guns, run the *Scorpion* aboard, and carried her without difficulty. This surprise was wholly attributed to the want of signals, and Mr. Turner was honourably acquitted for the loss of his vessel. In carrying the *Tigress*, the enemy had a lieutenant and 2 men killed, and 7 men wounded. On board the *Tigress* 3 men were killed, and all the officers and 3 seamen were wounded. The *Scorpion*, being surprised, made but a trifling resistance. These little captures, which were very creditable to the enterprise of the enemy, terminated the war on the upper lakes, the vessels being shortly after laid up.

During the winter of 1814-15 both belligerents were building, the enemy having laid down a second two-decker at Kingston, while the Americans prepared to build two at the Harbour. To effect this purpose in time, Commodore Chauncey sent in a statement to the department, by which it appears the service would require 600 ship-carpenters, 60 ship-joiners, 120 sawyers, 75 blacksmiths, 25 block and pump makers, 10 boat-builders, 10 spar-makers, 18 gun-carriage-makers, 16 sail-makers, 10 armourers, and 5 tin-men, or 949 artisans in all. With this force, Mr. Eckford engaged to put into the water two ships, to carry 102 guns each, within sixty days from the time he commenced, the timber then standing in the forest. The order was given, and the work commenced in January. The news that a treaty of peace had been signed, was received when the work on one of these vessels, called the *New Orleans*, had been commenced but twenty-nine days. She was then nearly planked in, and it was calculated would have been in the water in twenty-seven days more. The second vessel was but little behind her, and there is no doubt that Commodore Chauncey would have taken the lake, as soon as the navigation opened, with a force consisting of 2 sail of the line, 2 frigates, 2 corvettes, 4 brigs, and as many small craft as the

*Now Commander Champlin.

service could possibly have required. As the enemy had received the frames of one or two frigates from England, and had already begun to set them up, it is probable that a frigate would have been added to this force, by building her of the timber found too small for the heavier ships.*

The peace put a stop to the strife in ship-building, and terminated the war on the lakes. In this inland contest, while the enemy had been active, bold, and full of resources, impartial judges must award the palm to the Americans. On the upper lakes and on Champlain, the English had sought general actions, and decisive victories placed the republic in nearly undisputed command of those waters. The important results that had been expected, fully rewarded this success. On Lake Ontario, the English pursued a different policy, cautiously avoiding any conflict that might prove final, unless under circumstances that would ensure victory.

On Lake Champlain the enemy captured in the course of the war, the *Eagle* and *Growler*, by means of their army. These two vessels were subsequently retaken, under the names of the *Chubb* and the *Finch*, and the whole English force was defeated. On Lake Erie, the success of the enemy was limited to the surprise of the four schooners mentioned in this chapter; while they lost equally by surprise, the *Detroit* and *Caledonia*, their whole squadron in action, and a schooner on Lake Huron blown up. On Lake Ontario, the success of the enemy was limited to the capture of the *Julia* and *Growler*, in the affair of the 10th of August, and the re-capture of the latter vessel at Oswego. On no other occasion, with the exception of the gig of Mr. Gregory, and one boat carrying a gun and two cables, did any man, or thing, belonging to the navy fall into his hands. He

* Henry Eckford, the justly celebrated builder by whom all these prodigies in constructing were performed, was a native of Scotland. Having adopted his art for a profession, he came to the Canadas while still a lad, and passed sometime at Montreal, occupied in learning his trade. In 1791, when only 19 years of age, he determined to establish himself in the United States, and crossing from Kingston, he landed on the very point, at the mouth of the Oswego, where 17 years later he set up the frame of the *Oneida 16*, the first American vessel of war that was ever launched upon the lakes. Proceeding to New York, he got into business and soon was known as one of the best and most enterprising ship-builders of that port. About the year 1807 he began to be employed by government, and during the whole war he was at the head of the building yards on Lake Ontario, where, considering the difficulties with which he had to contend, he gained great distinction by his inexhaustible resources, self-reliance, energy, zeal, and the liberal and enlarged views he took of his duties. After the war Mr. Eckford resumed his calling in New York, building many fine frigates for the South American States. He also built the *Ohio 80*, for government.

About the year 1829, Mr. Eckford was induced to go to Constantinople, to build some ships for the Sultan. While making his arrangements to put the Turkish fleet on a respectable footing, so far as ships were concerned, this enterprising and far-sighted builder died of a fever.

Henry Eckford was undoubtedly a man of genius. He had not been thoroughly educated in the higher branches of his art, but he raised himself to a level of those who were, by the force of his own talents. His notions of the powers of a ship, were just, practical, and entirely free from prejudices, and his eye was as true as his judgment. As a man he was greatly respected, and as a citizen, he showed a noble confidence in the government, by casting his whole fortune on that of the state, at a moment, when others, with louder professions of attachment, were distrustful, backward, and untrue. He married early in New York, and left descendants in the third generation behind him when he went abroad on his eastern enterprise, intending to return to a home that had become endeared by the associations of forty years, at its termination.

made one exceedingly impotent attack on the Harbour, (previously to the arrival of Commodore Yeo,) was beaten in a subsequent and more spirited attempt on the same place, succeeded in taking Oswego, and committed some ravages at Sodus, and at the mouth of the Genesee. For a few days he also co-operated with his army. On the part of the Americans, a spirited attack was made on Kingston in 1812; York was twice captured in 1813, as was Fort George once; a brig was brought off from York, and a vessel of 20 guns burned at the same place; another of 14 guns at Presque Isle; a third driven ashore and blown up to the westward of Niagara; six gun-vessels and three gun-boats, and many smaller craft were captured; and, at different times, two captains, many other officers, and several hundred seamen and marines were taken. Kingston was often long and closely blockaded, and, with short and few exceptions, the Americans had the command of the lake. The greater age of the English than the American frontier, as a settled country, gave the enemy material advantages, of which he fully availed himself. Owing to the vast resources of the English marine, which throughout the year 1814 had no other employment than this war, Sir James Yeo was enabled to render essential service to the British army, beyond a question, though the ascendancy was lost during several of the most important months of the season. It ought never to be forgotten, moreover, that the wealthier portion of the American people, who, as a body, have seldom been true to the nation, in conflicts of opinion with Great Britain, allowed their confidence in the public securities to be so much impaired, that all the heaviest operations of Commodore Chauncey were carried on by means of a depreciated currency; the securities that reason and truth should have taught capitalists were the very best that the world afforded, having been suffered to fall into a discredit that greatly impaired the efforts of all the public servants.

No officer of the American navy ever filled a station of the responsibility and importance of that which Commodore Chauncey occupied; and it may be justly questioned if any officer could have acquitted himself better, of the high trust that had been reposed in him. He commanded the profound respect of the vigilant, bold, and skilful commander to whom he was opposed, and to the last, retained the entire confidence of his own government.

CHAPTER XXV.

Cruise of the *Constitution*, Capt. Stewart—Capture of the man-of-war *Picton*—Her second cruise—She makes two prizes—is chased by two British vessels—engages both, and captures the *Cyane*—She pursues and captures the *Levant*—The *Cyane*, Lieut. Hoffman, sails for America—The *Constitution* and the *Levant* chased by a British squadron off Port Praya—The *Levant* is pursued into port where she strikes to the enemy—The *Constitution* returns home—her services and character as a “lucky ship.”

WHEN Commodore Bainbridge gave up the command of the *Constitution* 44, in 1813, that ship was found to be so decayed as to require extensive repairs. Her crew was principally sent upon the lakes, a new one entered, and the command of her was given to Captain Charles Stewart. The ship, however, was not able to get to sea until the winter of 1814, when she made a cruise to the southward, passing down the coast, and running through the West Indies, on her way home, where she fell in with *La Pique* 36, which ship made her escape by going through the Mona passage in the night. Previously to her return, the *Constitution* captured the *Picton* 14, a man-of-war schooner of the enemy. Reaching the American coast, she was chased into Marblehead by two English frigates, the *Junon* and *Tenedos*. Shortly after she went to Boston. In this cruise, the *Constitution* made a few prizes, in addition to the schooner.

On the 17th of December, the *Constitution* again left Boston, and ran off Bermuda, thence to the vicinity of Madeira, and into the Bay of Biscay. After this, she cruised some time in sight of the Rock of Lisbon, making two prizes, one of which was destroyed, and the other sent in. While in the vicinity of Lisbon, she made a large ship and gave chase, but before her courses were raised, one of the prizes just mentioned, was fallen in with, and while securing it, the strange sail disappeared. This vessel is understood to have been the *Elizabeth* 74, which, on her arrival at Lisbon, hearing that the *Constitution* was off the coast, immediately came out in pursuit of her; but Captain Stewart had stood to the southward and westward, in quest of an enemy said to be in that direction.

On the morning of the 20th of February, the wind blowing a light *Levanter*, from one of those impulses which cannot be explained, finding nothing where he was, Captain Stewart ordered the helm put up, and the ship ran off southwest, varying her position, in that direction, fifty or sixty miles. At 1 P. M., a stranger was seen on the larboard bow, when the ship hauled up two or three points, and made sail in chase. In about twenty minutes, the stranger was made out to be a ship, and half an hour later, a second vessel was seen farther to leeward, which at two was also ascertained to be a ship. The *Constitution* kept standing on, all three vessels on bow-lines, until four, when the nearest of the strangers made a signal to the ship to leeward, and shortly after, he kept away and ran down towards his consort, then about three leagues under his lee. The *Constitution* immediately squared away, and set her studding-sails,

alow and aloft. No doubt was now entertained of the strangers being enemies; the nearest ship having the appearance of a small frigate, and the vessel to leeward of a large sloop of war. The first was carrying studding-sails on both sides, while the last was running off under short canvass, to allow her consort to close. Captain Stewart believed it was their intention to keep away, on their best mode of sailing, until night, in the hope of escaping; and he crowded every thing that would draw, with a view to get the nearest vessel under his guns. About half past four, the spar proving defective, the main royal-mast was carried away, and the chase gained. A few guns were now fired, but finding that the shot fell short, the attempt to cripple the stranger was abandoned.

Perceiving at half past five, that it was impossible to prevent the enemy from effecting a junction, the *Constitution*, then a little more than a league distant from the farthest ship, cleared for action. Ten minutes later, the two chases passed within hail of each other, came by the wind with their heads to the northward, hauled up their courses, and were evidently clearing to engage. In a few minutes, both ships suddenly made sail, close by the wind, in order to weather upon the American frigate, but perceiving that the latter was closing too fast, they again hauled up their courses, and formed on the wind, the smallest ship ahead.

At 6 P. M., the *Constitution* had the enemy completely under her guns, and she showed her ensign. The strangers answered this defiance, by setting English colours, and five minutes later, the American ship ranged up abeam of the sternmost vessel, at the distance of a cable's length, passing ahead with her sails lifting, until the three ships formed nearly an equilateral triangle, the *Constitution* to windward. In this masterly position the action commenced, the three vessels keeping up a hot and unceasing fire for about a quarter of an hour, when that of the enemy sensibly slackened. The sea being covered with an immense cloud of smoke, and it being now moonlight, Captain Stewart ordered the cannonading to cease. In three minutes the smoke had blown away, when the leading ship of the enemy was seen under the lee-beam of the *Constitution*, while the sternmost was luffing, as if she intended to tack and cross her wake. Giving a broadside to the ship abreast of her, the American frigate threw her main and mizen-topsails with topgallant sails set, flat aback, shook all forward, let fly her jib sheet, and backed swiftly astern, compelling the enemy to fill again to avoid being raked. The leading ship now attempted to tack, to cross the *Constitution's* forefoot, when the latter filled, boarded her fore-tack, shot ahead, forced her antagonist to wear under a raking broadside, and to run off to leeward to escape from the weight of her fire.

The *Constitution* perceiving that the largest ship was wearing also, wore in her turn, and crossing her stern, raked her with effect, though the enemy came by the wind immediately, and delivered his larboard broadside, but as the *Constitution* ranged up close on his weather quarter, he struck. Mr. Hoffman, the second lieutenant of the *Con-*

stitution, was immediately sent to take possession, the prize proving to be the British ship *Cyane*, Captain Falcon.

In the mean time, the ship that had run to leeward, had no intention of abandoning her consort, but had been forced out of the combat, by the crippled condition of her running rigging, and to avoid the weight of the *Constitution's* fire. She was ignorant of the fate of the *Cyane*, but at the end of about an hour, having repaired damages, she hauled up, and met the *Constitution* coming down in quest of her. It was near nine before the two ships crossed each other on opposite tacks, the *Constitution* to windward, and exchanged broadsides. The English ship finding her antagonist too heavy, immediately bore up, in doing which she got a raking discharge, when the *Constitution* boarded her fore-tack and made sail, keeping up a most effective chasing fire, from her two bow guns, nearly every shot of which told. The two ships were so near each other, that the ripping of the enemy's planks was heard on board the American frigate. The former was unable to support this long, and at 10 P. M. he came by the wind, fired a gun to leeward, and lowered his ensign. Mr. W. B. Shubrick, the third lieutenant, was sent on board to take possession, when it was found that the prize was the *Levant* 18, the Honourable Captain Douglas.

During this cruise, the *Constitution* mounted 52 guns; and she had a complement of about 470 men, all told, a few of whom were absent in a prize. The *Cyane* was a frigate-built ship, that properly rated 24 guns, though she appeared as only a 20 in Steele's list, mounting 22 thirty-two-pound carronades on her gun-deck, and 10 eighteen-pound carronades, with two chase guns, on her quarter-deck and fore-castle, making 34 in all. The *Levant* was a new ship, rating 18, and mounting 18 thirty-two-pound carronades, a shifting eighteen on her topgallant fore-castle, and two chase guns, or 21 in all. There were found in the *Cyane*, 168 prisoners, of whom 26 were wounded. The precise number slain on board her is not known; Captain Stewart, probably judging from an examination of the muster-book, computing it at 12, while the accounts given by the English publications differ, some putting the killed at only 4 and others at 6. It was probably between the two estimates. Her regular crew was about 185, all told; and there is no reason to believe that it was not nearly, if not absolutely full. Captain Stewart supposes it to have been 180 in the action, which was probably about the truth. The *Levant's* regular complement is said to have been 130, all told; but it appears by a statement published in Barbadoes, where some of her officers shortly after went, that there were a good many supernumeraries in the two vessels, who were going to the Western Islands, to bring away a ship that was building there. Captain Stewart supposes the *Levant* to have had 156 men in the action, of whom he believed 23 to have been killed, and 16 wounded. The first estimate may have been too high, though the truth can probably never be known. It is believed that no English official account of this action has ever been published, but the Barbadoes statement makes the joint loss of the two ships, 10 killed, and 28

wounded; other English accounts raise it as high as 41 in all. It may have been a little less than the estimate of Captain Stewart, although his account of the wounded must have been accurate, but was probably considerably more than that of the English statements. The *Constitution* had 3 killed, and 12 wounded, or she sustained a total loss of 15 men. By 1 A. M., of the 21st, she was ready for another action. Although it was more than three hours and a half, from the time this combat commenced, before the *Levant* struck, the actual fighting did not occupy three-quarters of an hour. For a night action, the execution on both sides, was unusual, the enemy firing much better than common. The *Constitution* was hulled oftener in this engagement, than in both her previous battles, though she suffered less in her crew, than in the combat with the *Java*. She had not an officer hurt.

The manner in which Captain Stewart handled his ship, on this occasion, excited much admiration among nautical men, it being an unusual thing for a single vessel to engage two enemies, and escape being raked. So far from this occurring to the *Constitution*, however, she actually raked both her opponents, and the manner in which she backed and filled in the smoke, forcing her two antagonists down to leeward, when they were endeavouring to cross her stern or fore-foot, is among the most brilliant manœuvring in naval annals.

It is due to a gallant enemy to say, that Captain Douglas commanded the respect of the Americans, by his intrepid perseverance in standing by his consort. Although the attempt might not have succeeded, the time necessarily lost in securing the *Cyane*, gave him an opportunity to endeavour to escape, that he nobly refused to improve.

Captain Stewart proceeded with his two prizes to Port Praya, where he arrived on the 10th of March. Here a vessel was engaged as a cartel, and more than a hundred of the prisoners were landed with a view to help fit her for sea. Saturday, March 11th, 1815, a little after meridian, while the cutter was absent to bring the cartel under the stern of the frigate, Mr. Shubrick, then the first lieutenant of the *Constitution*,* was walking the quarter-deck, when his attention was attracted by a hurried exclamation from an English midshipman, that a frigate was in the offing. A severe reprimand in a low tone, from one of the English captains, followed; and on looking over the quarter, the subject of this little interruption was ascertained. The sea was covered with a heavy fog, near the water, and there was a good deal of haze above, but in the latter, the sails of a large ship were visible. She was on a wind, looking in-shore, and evidently stretching towards the roads. Examining the stranger, Mr. Shubrick went below and reported the circumstance to Captain Stewart. This officer believing that the strange sail would prove to be an English frigate or an Indiaman, directed the lieutenant to return on deck, call all hands, and get ready to go out and attack her. As soon as this order was given, the officer took a new look at the stranger, when he discovered the canvass of two other ships rising

* Messrs. Ballard and Hoffman being in the prizes.

above the bank of fog, in the same direction. These vessels were evidently heavy men-of-war, and Captain Stewart was immediately apprised of the fresh discovery. That prompt and decided officer did not hesitate an instant concerning the course he ought to take. Well knowing that the English would disregard the neutrality of any port that had not sufficient force to resist them, or which did not belong to a nation they were obliged to respect, he immediately made a signal for the prizes to follow, and ordered the Constitution's cable to be cut. In 10 minutes after this order was issued, and in 14, after the first ship had been seen, the American frigate was standing out of the roads, under her three topsails.

The cool and officer-like manner in which sail was made and the ship cast, on this occasion, has been much extolled, not an instant having been lost by hurry or confusion. The prizes followed with promptitude. The northeast trades were blowing, and the three vessels passed out to sea about gun-shot to windward of the hostile squadron, just clearing East Point. As the Constitution cleared the land, she crossed topgallant-yards, boarded her tacks, and set all the light sails that would draw. The English prisoners on shore, took possession of a battery, and fired at her as she went out. As soon as the American ships had gained the weather beam of the enemy, the latter tacked, and the six vessels stood off to the southward and eastward, carrying every thing that would draw, and going about ten knots.

The fog still lay so thick upon the water as to conceal the hulls of the strangers, but they were supposed to be two line-of-battle ships, and a large frigate, the vessel most astern and to leeward, being the commodore. The frigate weathered on all the American ships, gaining on the Levant and Cyane, but falling astern of the Constitution, while the two larger vessels, on the latter's lee quarter, held way with her. As soon as clear of the land, the Constitution, cut adrift two of her boats, the enemy pressing her too hard to allow of their being hoisted in. The Cyane was gradually dropping astern and to leeward, rendering it certain, if she stood on, that the most weatherly of the enemy's vessels would soon be alongside of her; and at 10 minutes past one, Captain Stewart made a signal for her to tack. This order was obeyed by Mr. Hoffman, the prize-master; and it was now expected that one of the enemy's ships would go about, and follow him, a hope that was disappointed. The Cyane finding that she was not pursued, stood on until she was lost in the fog, when Mr. Hoffman tacked again, anticipating that the enemy might chase him to leeward. This prudent officer improved his advantage, by keeping to windward long enough to allow the enemy to get ahead, should they pursue him, when he squared away for America, arriving safely at New York on the 10th of April following.

The three ships of the enemy continued to chase the Constitution and Levant. As the vessels left the land the fog lessened, though it still lay so dense on the immediate surface of the ocean, as to leave Captain Stewart in doubt as to the force of his pursuers. The English officers on board the Constitution affirmed that the vessel that was getting into her wake was the *Acasta* 40, Captain Kerr, a twenty-

four pounder ship, and it was thought that the three were a squadron that was cruising for the *President*, *Peacock*, and *Hornet*, consisting of the *Leander* 50, *Sir George Collier*, *Newcastle* 50, *Lord George Stuart*, and the *Acasta*, the ships that they subsequently proved to be. The *Newcastle* was the vessel on the lee-quarter of the *Constitution*, and by half past two the fog had got so low, that her officers were seen standing on the hammock-cloths, though the line of her ports was not visible. She now began to fire by divisions, and some opinion could be formed of her armament, by the flashes of her guns, through the fog. Her shot struck the water within a hundred yards of the American ship, but did not rise again. By 3 P. M., the *Levant* had fallen so far astern, that she was in the very danger from which the *Cyane* had so lately been extricated, and Captain Stewart made her signal to tack also. Mr. Ballard immediately complied, and 7 minutes later the three English ships tacked, by signal, and chased the prize, leaving the *Constitution* standing on in a different direction, and going at the rate of eleven knots.

Mr. Ballard finding the enemy bent on following the *Levant*, with the *Acasta* to windward of his wake, ran back into Port Praya, and anchored, at 4 o'clock, within 150 yards of the shore, under a strong battery. The enemy's ships had commenced firing, as soon as it was seen that the *Levant* would gain the anchorage, and all three now opened on the prize. After bearing the fire for a considerable time the colours of the *Levant* were hauled down. No one was hurt in the prize, Mr. Ballard causing his men to lie on the deck, as soon as the ship was anchored. The English prisoners in the battery, also fired at the *Levant*.

Sir George Collier was much criticised for the course he pursued on this occasion. It was certainly a mistake to call off more than one ship to chase the *Levant*, though the position of the *Leander* in the fog, so far to leeward and astern, did not give the senior officer the best opportunities for observing the course of events. There was certainly every prospect of the *Acasta's* bringing the *Constitution* to action in the course of the night, though the other vessels might have been left so far astern, as still to render the result doubtful.

Whatever may be thought of the management of the enemy, there can be but one opinion of that of Captain Stewart. The promptitude with which he decided on his course, the judgment with which he ordered the prizes to vary their courses, and the steadiness with which the *Constitution* was commanded, aided in elevating a professional reputation that was already very high.

This terminated the exploits of the gallant *Constitution*, or *Old Ironsides*, as she was affectionately called in the navy, Captain Stewart, after landing his prisoners at Maranham, and learning at Porto Rico, that peace had been made, carrying her into New York, about the middle of May. In the course of two years and nine months, this ship had been in three actions, had been twice critically chased, and had captured five vessels of war, two of which were frigates, and a third frigate-built. In all her service, as well before Tripoli, as in this war, her good fortune was remarkable. She never

was dismasted, never got ashore, or scarcely ever suffered any of the usual accidents of the sea. Though so often in battle, no very serious slaughter ever took place on board her. One of her commanders was wounded, and four of her lieutenants had been killed, two on her own decks, and two in the *Intrepid*; but, on the whole, her entire career had been that of what is usually called a "lucky ship." Her fortune, however, may perhaps be explained in the simple fact, that she had always been well commanded. In her two last cruises she had probably possessed as fine a crew as ever manned a frigate. They were principally New England men, and it has been said of them, that they were almost qualified to fight the ship without her officers.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Chase and capture of the *President*. Com. Decatur, by a British squadron off New York—The *Hornet*, Capt. Biddle, captures the *Penguin*—is chased ineffectually by the British ship *Cornwallis*—Capture of the cruiser *Nautilus*, by the *Peacock*—The buying or building of two squadrons of small vessels ordered—End of the war—Character of the American navy.

WHEN Commodore Rodgers left the *President*, in the summer of 1814, to take command of the *Guerriere*, Commodore Decatur was transferred to that ship, the *United States* and *Macedonian*, then blockaded in the Thames, having been laid up, and the *Hornet*, Captain Biddle, left to protect them. This service was particularly irksome to an officer of the spirit of the last named gentleman, and persevering in his applications to be released from it, he finally received an order to join Commodore Decatur at New York, where the *President* had been some time detained to make part of the defence of the port, while the enemy was committing his depredations on the coast, during the mild weather. No sooner did Captain Biddle receive this welcome command, than he took the first favourable occasion to pass out, leaving the blockading squadron to the eastward, and ran down to New York. This was in the month of November, 1814, and Commodore Decatur had now a force consisting of the *President* 44, his own ship, *Peacock* 18, Captain Warrington, *Hornet* 18, Captain Biddle, and Tom Bowline store-vessel. His destination was the East Indies, where it was thought great havoc might be made among the valuable trade of the English.

Owing to different causes, but principally to the wish of the government to keep a force at New York to resist the depredations of the enemy, Commodore Decatur did not go to sea until the middle of January, 1815. The *President* dropped down to Sandy Hook alone, leaving the other vessels lying at Staten Island, and on the night of the 14th, she made an attempt to cross the bar. In consequence of the darkness, the pilots missed the channel and the ship

struck, beating heavily on the sands, for an hour and a half. About 10 o'clock the tide had risen to its height, and she was forced into deep water. Although the vessel had received considerable injury, it was impossible to return, and a strong blockading force being in the offing, it became necessary to carry sail to get off the coast before morning. It had blown a gale the previous day, and Commodore Decatur, rightly judging that the enemy had been driven to leeward, decided to run along the land to the northward and eastward, as the best means of avoiding a greatly superior force. This determination was judicious, and, had not the detention occurred on the bar, it would have been completely successful. After running off in a northerly direction for about 5 hours, the course of the ship was altered to S. E. by E. Two hours later, a strange sail was discovered ahead, within gunshot, and two others being soon after seen, the President hauled up and passed to the northward of them all. At daylight, four ships were in chase, one on each quarter and two astern. The nearest vessel was believed to be the *Majestic rasée*, which fired a broadside or two, in the hope of crippling the American frigate as she passed, but without effect. It is now known that the enemy had been driven down to the southward by the gale, and that he was just returning to his station, when this unlucky encounter occurred.

The chase continued throughout the forenoon, the wind becoming lighter and baffling. The *rasée* was dropped materially, but the next nearest ship, the *Endymion* 40, a twenty-four-pounder frigate, had closed, and as the President was very deep, being filled with stores for a long cruise, Commodore Decatur commenced lightening her. Unfortunately the commander, all the lieutenants, and the master were strangers, in one sense, to the ship, most of them never having been at sea in her at all, and neither in any responsible situation. The duty of lightening a ship in chase, is one of the most delicate operations in seamanship, and it ought never to be attempted except by those perfectly acquainted with her lines, trim, and stowage. Half a dozen more water casks emptied at one end of the vessel than at the other may injure her sailing; and the utmost care is to be observed lest the indiscretion of inferiors in the hold, defeat the calculations of the commander on deck. On the other hand, Commodore Decatur decided to undertake this delicate operation under the most favourable circumstances that a want of familiarity with his ship would allow, as the wind was getting to be light, and was nearly aft.

It is not certain, however, that the sailing of the President was injured by the process of lightening, for she is supposed to have suffered materially while ashore, and the enemy obtained a material advantage by a change in the wind. While it was still light with the American ship, the British, about 3 P. M., were bringing down with them a fresh breeze. Soon after, the *Endymion*, the nearest vessel, having got within reach of shot, opened with her bow guns, the President returning the fire with her stern chasers. The object of each, was to cripple the spars of the other. It is said, that on this occasion, the shot of the American ship were observed to be thrown with a momentum so unusually small, as to have since excited much distrust of the

quality of her powder. It is even added, that many of these shot were distinctly seen, when clear of the smoke, until they struck.

By 5 P. M., the *Endymion* had got so far on the starboard, or lee quarter of the *President*, that no gun of the latter would bear on her without altering the course. The fire of the English ship now became exceedingly annoying, for she was materially within point-blank range, and every shot cut away something aloft. Still it was borne, in the hope that she would range up alongside, and give the *President* an opportunity to lay her aboard. Finding, however, that the enemy warily kept his position by yawing, in the hope of gradually crippling the American ship, Commodore Decatur decided on a course that singularly partook of the daring chivalry of his character.

It was now evident that the sailing of the *President* was much impaired by some cause or other; either by injuries received on the bar, or by the manner in which she had been lightened, and escape by flight had become nearly hopeless. Commodore Decatur, therefore, determined to make an effort to exchange ships, by carrying the *Endymion*, hand to hand, and to go off in the prize, abandoning his own vessel to the enemy. With this object in view, he determined to keep away, lay the enemy aboard if possible, and put every thing on the success of the experiment. The plan was communicated to the people, who received it cheerfully, and just at dusk, the helm of the *President* was put up, bringing the wind over the taffrail, the ship heading south. But she was so closely watched, that the *Endymion* kept away at the same moment, and the two ships soon came abeam of each other, when both delivered their broadsides. All the *President's* attempts to close, however, were defeated, for the vessels were about a quarter of a mile apart, and as she hauled nearer to the enemy, the latter sheered away from her. Without a superiority in sailing, it was impossible for Commodore Decatur to get any nearer, while the English ship chose to avoid him, and he was now reduced to the necessity of attempting to get rid of the *Endymion* by dismantling her. The two frigates, consequently continued running off dead before the wind, keeping up a heavy cannonade for two hours and a half, when the enemy's vessel was so far injured that she fell astern, most of her sails having been cut from the yards. The *President*, at this moment, was under her royal studding-sails, and there is no doubt, by choosing her position, she might easily have compelled her adversary to strike; but, by this time, though the night was dark, the vessels astern were in sight, and she was obliged to resume her original course to avoid them. In doing this, the *President* hauled up under the broadside of her late antagonist, without receiving any fire to injure her.

It was now half past eight, and the *President* continued to run off southward, repairing damages, but it was found impossible to prevent the other vessels of the enemy from closing. At 11 P. M. the *Pomone* 38, got on the weather bow of the American ship, and poured in a broadside; and as the *Tenedos*, of the same force, was fast closing on the quarter, and the *Majestic* was within gun-shot

astern, further resistance was useless. Commodore Decatur had ordered his people below, when he saw the two last frigates closing, but finding that his signal of submission was not at first understood, the *Pomone* continuing to fire, an order had been given for them to return to their guns, just as the enemy ceased. The *Majestic* coming up before the removal of Commodore Decatur, that gentleman delivered his sword to her captain, who was the senior English officer present.

In this long and close cannonade, agreeably to the official reports, the *President* lost 24 men killed, and 56 wounded. She was a good deal injured in her hull, and most of her important spars were badly damaged. By one of those chances which decide the fortunes of men, among the slain were the first, fourth, and fifth lieutenants.*

The *Endymion* had 11 killed, and 14 wounded, according to the published reports. As it is known that an order was given to aim at the rigging and spars of this ship, with a view to cripple her, which was effectually done, it is probable that this statement was accurate. It is believed, however, on respectable authority, that a great many shot hulled the *Endymion*, which did not penetrate, a fact which, coupled with other observations made during the day, has induced a distrust of the quality of the *President's* powder. Owing to one, or to both, the circumstances named, the English ship lost but about a third as many men as the American, though a considerable number of the *President's* people were killed and wounded by the unresisted fire of the *Pomone*, having been ordered back to the guns before the latter ceased.

The *President* was carried to Bermuda, and both she and the *Endymion* were dismasted in a gale, before reaching port. The latter also threw overboard her upper-deck guns. Commodore Decatur was shortly after parolled, and he and all his surviving officers and men, were subsequently acquitted, with honour, for the loss of the ship. An unhandsome attempt was at first made, on the part of some of the English publications, to raise an impression that the *President* had been captured by the *Endymion*, but the facts were too notorious to allow it to succeed. Nothing would have been easier than for the *President* to have chosen her position, when she left the *Endymion*, and probably to have captured her without any material additional loss to herself, since a ship virtually without canvass, would evidently have been at the mercy of one that went out of action with

* Messrs. Babbitt, Hamilton, and Howell. Mr. Fitz-Henry Babbitt was a native of Massachusetts, and a good although an unfortunate officer; this being the second time in which, as a first lieutenant he had been captured during this war, when a few hours out of New York. He was standing on the coamings of the after-hatch, working the ship, Commodore Decatur being seated on the hammock-cloths giving directions, when the *Endymion's* first broadside was received. A twenty-four-pound shot struck Mr. Babbitt on the knee, and he fell down the hatch, fracturing his skull by the fall. He died in half an hour. An order was sent below for Mr. John Templar Shubrick, the second lieutenant, to come on deck and take the trumpet. As this gentleman passed aft, along the gun-deck, he asked Mr. Hamilton, who commanded the after-guns, and who was his townsman, how he was getting on. While in the act of making a cheerful reply, the latter was nearly cut in two, by a heavy shot. Mr. Hamilton was from South Carolina, and a son of a former Secretary of the navy. Mr. Howell, a son of the late Governor Howell of New Jersey, was killed on the quarter-deck, by a spent grape-shot which fractured his skull.

royal studding-sails set. The difference in loss between the two ships is easily explained. The first two or three broadsides, are usually the destructive broadsides. The President suffered more in the first half hour she was engaged with the *Endymion*, than in the succeeding two hours; and this was the time when her own fire was directed at her antagonist's spars. The fact that the *Endymion* did not join the other ships until three or four hours after the President struck, when, if able to have done so, there was every motive for her to have acted otherwise, is perfectly conclusive as to the condition of the two vessels, so far as the power of motion was concerned. Having the power of motion, by bringing a fresh broadside to bear on the *Endymion*, her capture would have been made certain, a well conditioned frigate seldom lying long near an adversary, without making a serious impression on her hull, when the latter is not able to return her fire.*

The commanders of the *Peacock*, *Hornet*, and *Tom Bowline* brig, ignorant of the capture of the President, followed her to sea, about the 22d, taking advantage of a strong northwester, to pass the bar by daylight. The enemy was seen lying-to at the southward and eastward, but was disregarded. A few days out the *Hornet* parted company in chase of a neutral, when all three vessels made the best of their way to the island of *Tristan d'Acunha*, the place of rendezvous appointed by Commodore Decatur. The *Peacock* and *Tom Bowline* arrived about the middle of March, but bad weather coming on, they were driven off the land. On the morning of the 23d of the same month, the *Hornet* came in, with the wind fresh at S. S. W., and was about to anchor, having let go her topsail sheets to clew up, when the men aloft discovered a sail to windward. The stranger was standing to the westward, and was soon shut in by the land. Captain Biddle immediately sheeted home his topsails again, and made a stretch to windward, and towards the chase, which was shortly after seen running down before the wind. There being little doubt as to the character of the stranger, the *Hornet* hove-to, in waiting for him to come down, and when he had got near enough to render it prudent, the main-topsail was filled, and the ship was kept yawing, occasionally waring, both to allow him to close and to prevent him giving a raking fire.

At 1 40 P. M., the stranger having got within musket-shot, came to the wind, set English colours and fired a gun. On this challenge the *Hornet* luffed up, showed her ensign, and returned a broadside. For 15 minutes both vessels kept up a sharp cannonade, that of the American ship, in particular, being very animated and destructive, the enemy gradually drifting nearer, when the latter, finding it impossible to stand the *Hornet's* fire, put his helm up and ran down directly on the starboard broadside of the latter, to lay her aboard. The enemy's bowsprit came in between the main and mizen rigging of the *Hornet*, affording a perfectly good opportunity to attempt effecting his purpose, but, though his first lieutenant made a gallant

* The Macedonian, a merchant brig, that sailed in company with the President, easily escaped.

effort to lead on his men, the latter could not be induced to follow. Captain Biddle had called away boarders to repel boarders, and his people now manifested a strong wish to go into the English vessel, but perceiving his great advantage at the guns, that intrepid officer, who had been so free to adopt this expedient, when it was his duty to lead in his own person, judiciously refused his permission.

The vessels lay in this position but a minute or two, the American raking, when the sea lifted the *Hornet* ahead, carrying away her mizen rigging, davits, and spanker-boom, the enemy swinging round and hanging on the larboard quarter. At this moment, Captain Biddle sent the master forward to set the foresail, with a view to part the vessels when an officer on board the English ship called out that she surrendered. The positions prevented any other firing than that of small arms; this was ordered to cease, and Captain Biddle sprang upon the taffrail to inquire if the enemy submitted. While putting this question, he was within thirty feet of the forecastle of the English vessel, and two marines on board her discharged their muskets at him. The ball of one just missed the chin and passing through the skin of the neck, inflicted a severe, but fortunately not a dangerous wound. This incident drew a discharge of muskets from the *Hornet*, which killed the two marines; the American ship drew ahead at that instant, and the enemy lost his bowsprit and foremast as the vessels separated.

The *Hornet* now wore round, with a fresh broadside to bear, and was about to throw in a raking fire, when twenty men appeared at the deck and on the forecastle of the enemy, raising their hands for quarter, and eagerly calling out that they had struck. The excitement on board the American ship, however, was so great, in consequence of the manner in which their gallant captain had received his wound, that it was with the utmost difficulty Captain Biddle and his officers could prevent the people from pouring in another broadside.*

The prize was H. B. Majesty's brig the *Penguin* 18, mounting 19 carriage guns; viz., 16 thirty-two-pound carronades, two chase guns, and a shifting carronade on the topgallant forecastle. She was a vessel of the *Hornet*'s class, size, and metal, and is represented as having had a spare port forward, by means of which she could fight ten guns in broadside.† Her complement of men was 132, of whom 12 had been put on board her for the express purpose of engaging a very heavy American privateer called the *Young Wasp*, a fact that is known by a letter found in her, from the Admiral at the Cape of Good Hope, to which station the *Penguin* belonged. Captain Biddle stated the loss of his prize at 14 killed and 28 wounded. As respects the latter, there could be no mistake, though it was the

* Though this feeling was natural, the wound of Captain Biddle was probably the result of one of those accidental occurrences, which are inevitable in the confusion of a combat.

† On an accurate computation of the real (not nominal) metal of the two vessels, the *Hornet* would appear to have thrown, at a broadside, about nine pounds more shot than the *Penguin*, the latter not using her spare port. As respects the crews, the American ship had some ten or fifteen the most men at quarters. In tonnage the vessels were very nearly equal.

opinion of the officer in charge of the English vessel, that more men had been slain. Some time previously to this capture, the enemy had ceased to publish the official accounts of his nautical defeats, but a letter purporting to be the one written on this occasion, has found its way before the world, in which the English loss is stated at only 10 killed and 28 wounded. The *Penguin* was completely riddled with the *Hornet's* shot, lost her foremast and bowsprit, and her mainmast was too much injured to be secured. Among her slain was her commander, Captain Dickinson, and the boatswain; and among the wounded a lieutenant, two midshipmen, and the purser.

The *Hornet* had but 1 man killed, and 10 wounded. Among the latter, in addition to Captain Biddle, was the first lieutenant, Mr. Conner,* a young officer of high promise, whose life was considered in great danger for some time. Not a round shot touched the *Hornet's* hull, nor did her spars receive any material injury, though she was a good deal cut up in her rigging and sails.

The combat between the *Hornet* and the *Penguin* was one of the most creditable to the character of the American marine that occurred in the course of the war. The vessels were very fairly matched, and when it is remembered that an English flag-officer had sent the *Penguin* on especial service against a ship believed to be materially heavier than the vessel she actually encountered, it is fair to presume she was thought to be, in every respect, an efficient cruiser. Yet, with the advantage of the wind, this ship was taken in 22 minutes, including the time lost while she hung on the *Hornet's* quarter, and while the latter was waring. The neatness and despatch with which the American sloop did her work, the coolness with which she met the attempt to board, and the accuracy of her fire and handling, are all proofs of her having been a disciplined man-of-war, and of the high condition of that service in which she was one of the favourites. It is by such exploits that the character of a marine is most effectually proved.

A few hours after the action a strange and suspiciously-looking sail heaving in sight, a cable was taken from the *Penguin*, and the *Hornet* towed her some distance off the land. After thoroughly examining the prize, and getting out of her all the stores and provisions that were wanted, before daylight, on the morning of the 25th, Captain Biddle scuttled her. The *Hornet* then stood in towards the island to look for the strange sail, which was found to be the *Peacock*, having the *Tom Bowline* in company. An arrangement was now made, by which the latter was converted into a cartel, and was sent into St. Salvador with the prisoners.

As soon as he was released from this incumbrance, and from the great drain on his supplies, Captain Biddle was ready to continue his cruise. This spirited officer did not consider the capture of a vessel of the same class of his own, a reason of itself for returning to port; but, it having been ascertained, by means of the *Macedonian*, a brig which sailed with the *President*, that the latter ship was pro-

*Since Commodore Conner.

bably captured, Captain Warrington determined to proceed on the original cruise, with the remaining vessels. They sailed, accordingly, on the 13th of April, having remained at the island the time directed in the instructions of Commodore Decatur.

While making the best of their way towards the Indian seas, on the morning of the 27th of April, the two ships then being in lat. $38^{\circ} 30'$ S., long. 33° E., the Peacock made the signal of a stranger to the southward and eastward. Both the sloops of war made sail in chase. Though the wind was light, before evening it was found that the stranger was materially nearer. It now fell calm, and the chase was in sight in the morning. The wind coming out at N. W., the ships ran down before it, with studding-sails on both sides, the stranger hauling up, apparently, to look at them. The Peacock was the fastest vessel, and being two leagues ahead at half past 2, P. M., she was observed to manifest some caution about approaching the stranger, when the Hornet took in her starboard light sails, and hauled up for her consort. It was now thought, on board the latter ship, that the stranger was a large Indiaman, and that the Peacock was merely waiting for the Hornet to come up, in order to attack her. But an hour later Captain Warrington made a signal that the vessel in sight was a line-of-battle ship, and an enemy. The Hornet immediately hauled close upon the wind, the stranger then on her lee quarter, distant not quite two leagues, the Peacock passing ahead and soon getting clear of him.

It was now seen that the English ship sailed very fast, and was unusually weatherly. The Hornet being more particularly in danger, about 9 P. M., Captain Biddle felt it necessary to begin to lighten, his vessel being crowded with stores taken from the Penguin. Twelve tons of kentledge, a quantity of shot, some heavy spars, and the sheet anchor and cable, were thrown overboard. By 2 A. M., the enemy had drawn forward of the lee-beam, when the Hornet tacked to the westward, the enemy immediately following. At daylight on the 29th, the English ship was on the lee quarter of the American, and within gun-shot. At 7 o'clock she had English colours flying, with a rear-admiral's flag abroad, and she commenced firing. The shot passing over the Hornet, the launch was cut up and gotten rid of, the other anchors and cables, more shot, as many heavy articles as could be come at, and six of the guns were also thrown overboard. By 9 o'clock, the enemy had dropped so far astern that he ceased firing, the concussion produced by his guns having deadened the wind.

By 11 A. M., however, it was found that the enemy was again closing, when the Hornet threw overboard all the remaining guns but one, the boats, most of her shot, all the spare spars, and as many other articles from off deck and from below, as could be got at. She also cut up her topgallant forecastle, and threw the pieces into the ocean. At meridian, the enemy had got within a mile, and he began again to fire, his shot flying far beyond the ship. Fortunately but three struck her. One passed through her jib, another plunged on her deck, glancing and lodging forward, and a third also hulled her.

Still Captain Biddle held on, determined not to give up his ship while there was a ray of hope, for it was seen that the enemy was dropped while firing. About 2 P. M. the breeze freshened, and got more to the westward. Previously to this, the wind, by backing to the southeast, had greatly favoured the chase, but it now brought the *Hornet* more to windward, and she began to get brisk way on her. At sunset the stranger was more than a league astern, and the ship was running nine knots throughout the night, it blowing in squalls. The enemy was seen at intervals, carrying sail in chase, but at daylight he was nearly hull down astern. At half past 9 A. M., he took in his studding-sails, reefed his topsails and hauled off to the eastward, and two hours later, his upper sails had dipped. The *Hornet* had now no anchor, cable, or boat, and but one gun, and she made the best of her way to St. Salvador, for the relief of the wounded. Here Captain Biddle heard of the peace, when he sailed for New York, which port he reached on the 30th of July.

Captain Biddle gained nearly as much reputation for the steadiness and skill with which he saved his ship, on this occasion, as for the fine manner in which he had fought her a few weeks earlier. In the promptitude with which he had continued his cruise after capturing a vessel of equal force, the nation traced the spirit of the elder officer of the same name and family, who had rendered himself so conspicuous in the Revolution. He had been promoted to the rank of captain, though it was unknown to him, before he took the *Penguin*, but he received the other marks of approbation usual to such occasions. His conduct in the chase will be better appreciated, when it is added that his ship was as near the enemy, as the United States got to the *Macedonian*, until the latter was fairly crippled. The vessel that chased the *Hornet* was the *Cornwallis* 74, bearing the flag of an officer proceeding to the East Indies.

The *Peacock* continued her cruise, and on the 30th of June, in the Straits of Sunda, she fell in with the East India Company's cruiser, *Nautilus* 14, Captain Boyce, and, in consequence of Captain Warrington's having no knowledge of the peace, broadsides were exchanged, when the *Nautilus* struck. This unfortunate mistake occurred a few days after the period set for the termination of hostilities, and having ascertained that a treaty of peace had been ratified in March, Captain Warrington gave up the *Nautilus* the next day. The latter vessel had 6 killed and 8 wounded, but no person was hurt on board the *Peacock*, which ship immediately returned home.

The combat between the *Hornet* and *Penguin* was the last regular action of the war, and the rencontre between the *Peacock* and *Nautilus*, the last instance of hostilities between the belligerents. When the *Peacock* got in, every cruiser that had been out against the English had returned to port.

The burning of the frigate *Columbia*, at Washington, and the blockade of the Java in the Chesapeake, had induced the government, in the autumn of 1814, to purchase or build two squadrons of small vessels, one of which was to be commanded by Captain Porter, and the other by Captain Perry. The former succeeded in buying five

brigantines, or schooners, and he was about to sail with them, when the news of peace reached the country. The vessels, which formed one of these flying squadrons, were the *Firefly*, Captain Porter; *Spark*, Lieutenant Commandant Gamble; *Torch*, Lieutenant Commandant Chauncey; *Spitfire*, Captain Cassin,* and *Flambeau*, Lieutenant Commandant J. B. Nicholson. The first destination of this force was the West Indies, and it was understood that it was to sail with orders to burn, sink, and destroy, without attempting, except in very extraordinary cases, to get any thing in.

Captain Perry was less successful in finding suitable vessels, and three stout brigs, called the *Boxer*, *Saranac*, and *Chippewa*, were laid down, though built with green timber. Another, called the *Escape*, was purchased and named the *Prometheus*; but it would seem that a fifth vessel had not been found when peace was proclaimed. The *Boxer* was given to Lieutenant John Porter, the *Chippewa* to Lieutenant G. Campbell Read, the *Saranac* to Lieutenant Elton, and the *Prometheus* to Lieutenant Joseph J. Nicholson. The fifth vessel would have been Captain Perry's but that officer returned to the *Java*, as soon as it was known that the Flying Squadrons would not be used as originally intended.

Thus terminated the war of 1812, so far as it was connected with the American marine. The navy came out of this struggle with a vast increase of reputation. The brilliant style in which the ships had been carried into action, the steadiness and rapidity with which they had been handled, and the fatal accuracy of their fire, on nearly every occasion, produced a new era in naval warfare. Most of the frigate actions had been as soon decided as circumstances would at all allow, and in no instance was it found necessary to keep up the fire of a sloop of war an hour, when singly engaged. Most of the combats of the latter, indeed, were decided in about half that time. The execution done in these short conflicts was often equal to that made by the largest vessels of Europe, in general actions, and in some of them, the slain and wounded comprised a very large proportion of the crews.

It is not easy to say in which nation this unlooked-for result created the most surprise, America or England. In the first it produced a confidence in itself that had been greatly wanted, but which, in the end, perhaps, degenerated to a feeling of self-esteem and security that was not without danger, or entirely without exaggeration. The last was induced to alter its mode of rating, adopting one by no means as free from the imputation of a want of consistency as that which it abandoned, and it altogether changed its estimate of the force of single ships, as well as of the armaments of frigates. The ablest and bravest captains of the English fleet were ready to admit that a new power was about to appear on the ocean, and that it was not improbable the battle for the mastery of the seas would have to be fought over again. In short, while some of the ignorant, presuming, and boastful were disposed to find excuses for the unexpected nauti-

* This officer had been promoted for his gallantry in the battle of Plattsburg Bay.

cal reverses which Great Britain had met with in this short war, the sagacious and reflecting saw in them matter for serious apprehension and alarm. They knew that the former triumphs of their admirals had not so much grown out of an unusual ability to manœuvre fleets, as in the national aptitude to manage single ships, and they saw the proofs of the same aptitude, in the conduct of the Americans during this struggle, improved on by a skill in gunnery, that had never before been so uniformly manifested in naval warfare. In a word, it may be questioned if all the great victories of the last European conflicts caused more exultation among the uninstructed of that nation, than the defeats of this gave rise to misgivings and apprehensions, among those who were able to appreciate causes and to anticipate consequences in a matter so purely professional, as the construction, powers, and handling of ships. Many false modes of accounting for the novel character that had been given to naval battles was resorted to, and among other reasons, it was affirmed that the American vessels of war sailed with crews of picked seamen. That a nation which practised impressment, should imagine that another in which enlistments were voluntary, could possess an advantage of this nature, infers a strong disposition to listen to any means but the right one to account for an unpleasant truth. It is not known that a single vessel left the country, the case of the *Constitution* on her two last cruises excepted, with a crew that could be deemed extraordinary in this respect. No American man-of-war ever sailed with a complement composed of nothing but able seamen; and some of the hardest fought battles that occurred during this war, were fought by ship's companies that were materially worse than common. The people of the vessels on Lake Champlain, in particular, were of a quality much inferior to those usually found in ships of war. Neither were the officers, in general, old or very experienced. The navy itself had existed but fourteen years, when the war commenced; and some of the commanders began their professional careers, several years after the first appointments had been made. Perhaps one half of the lieutenants, in the service at the peace of 1815, had gone on board ship, for the first time, within six years from the declaration of the war, and very many of them within three or four. So far from the midshipmen having been masters and mates of merchantmen, as was reported at the time, they were generally youths that first quitted the ease and comforts of the paternal home, when they appeared on the quarter-deck of a man-of-war.

That the tone and discipline of the service were high, is true; but it must be ascribed to moral, and not to physical causes; to that aptitude in the American character for the sea, which has been so constantly manifested from the day the first pinnace sailed along the coast on the trading voyages of the seventeenth century, down to the present moment.

APPENDIX TO VOLUME II.

Note A. referred to page 15.

"By the honourable George Cranfield Berkeley, Vice-Admiral of the White, and Commander-in-Chief of his Majesty's ships and vessels employed in the river St. Lawrence, along the coast of Nova Scotia, the island of St. John, and Cape Breton, the Bay of Fundy, and at and about the island of Bermuda, or Somers' Island.

"Belisle,
Bellona,
Triumph,
Chichester,
Halifax,
Zenobia, cutter." } "Whereas, many seamen, subjects of His Britannic Majesty, and serving in his ships and vessels, as per margin, while at anchor in the Chesapeake, deserted, and entered on board the United States' frigate, called the Chesapeake, and openly paraded the streets of Norfolk, in sight of their officers, under the American flag; protected by the magistrates of the town, and the recruiting officer belonging to the above-mentioned American frigate, which magistrates and naval officer refused giving them up, although demanded by His Britannic Majesty's consul, as well as about the island of Bermuda, or Somers' Island, had deserted.

"The captains of His Majesty's ships and vessels under my command, are therefore hereby required and directed, in case of meeting with the American frigate, the Chesapeake, at sea, and without the limits of the United States, to show to the captain of her this order, and to require to search his ship for the deserters from the before-mentioned ships, and to proceed and search for the same, and if a similar demand should be made by the Americans, he is to be permitted to search for any deserters from their service, according to the customs and usage of civilised nations on terms of peace and amity with each other.

"Given under my hand at Halifax, Nova Scotia, the 1st June, 1807.

Signed "G. BERKELEY.

"To the respective captains and commanders of His Majesty's ships and vessels on the North American Station.

"By command of the Vice-Admiral.

Signed "JAMES BACKIE."

No. I.—COPY.

The captain of His Britannic Majesty's ship Leopard, has the honour to enclose the captain of the United States' ship Chesapeake,

an order from the honourable Vice-Admiral Berkeley, Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's ships on the North American station, respecting some deserters from the ships (therein mentioned) under his command, and supposed to be now serving as part of the crew of the Chesapeake.

The captain of the *Leopard* will not presume to say any thing in addition to what the commander-in-chief has stated, more than to express a hope that every circumstance respecting them may be adjusted in a manner that the harmony subsisting between the two countries may remain undisturbed.

H. M. ship Leopard, at sea, June 22d, 1807.

True copy,

CHAS. W. GOLDSBOROUGH,
Chief Clerk N. Department.

No. II.—COPY.

I know of no such men as you describe. The officers that were on the recruiting service for this ship were particularly instructed by the government, through me, not to enter any deserters from his B. M. ships, nor do I know of any being here. I am also instructed never to permit the crew of any ship that I command to be mustered by any other but their own officers. It is my disposition to preserve harmony, and I hope this answer to your despatch will prove satisfactory.

Signed JAMES BARRON.

At sea, June 22d, 1807.

To the commander of His B. M. ship *Leopard*.

True copy,

CHAS. W. GOLDSBOROUGH,
Chief Clerk N. Department.

No. III.—COPY.

SIR,—I consider the frigate *Chesapeake* your prize, and am ready to deliver her to any officer authorised to receive her. By the return of the boat I shall expect your answer.

And have the honour to be yours, etc.

Signed JAMES BARRON.

Chesapeake, at sea, June 22d, 1807.

To the commander of His B. M. ship *Leopard*.

True copy,

CHAS. W. GOLDSBOROUGH,
Chief Clerk N. Department.

No. IV.—COPY.

SIR,—Having, to the utmost of my power, fulfilled the instructions of my commander-in-chief, I have nothing more to desire, and must in consequence proceed to join the remainder of the squadron; repeating that I am ready to give you every assistance in my power,

and do most sincerely deplore that any lives should have been lost in the execution of a service which might have been adjusted more amicably, not only with respect to ourselves, but the nations to which we respectively belong.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your obedient servant,

Signed

S. P. HUMPHREYS.

Leopard, at sea, 22d June, 1807.

To the commander of the U. S. ship Chesapeake.

True Copy,

CHAS. W. GOLDSBOROUGH,

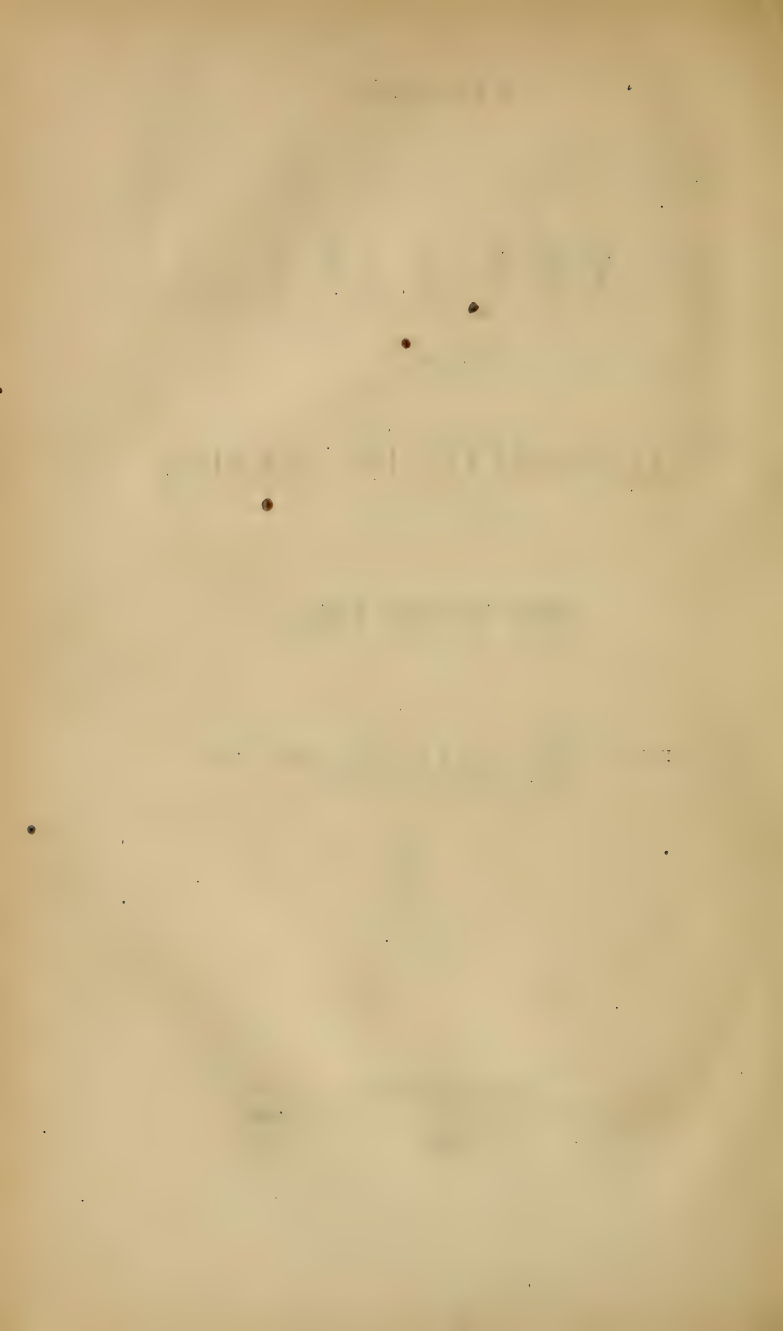
Chief Clerk N. Department.

END OF VOLUME II.

HISTORY
OF
THE NAVY
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
FROM 1815 TO 1853.

FROM MANUSCRIPTS OF J. FENIMORE COOPER, AND
OTHER AUTHENTIC SOURCES.

NEW YORK:
G. P. PUTNAM & CO., 10 PARK PLACE.
1854.



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NAVAL HISTORY

OF THE

UNITED STATES.

CONTINUED FROM 1815.

CHAPTER I.

Declaration of war against Algiers—Causes of the war—Com. Decatur sails with his squadron—Captures an Algerine frigate and brig—Treaty with Algiers—Loss of the *Epervier*—Settlements difficulties with Tunis and Tripoli—Squadron of Com. Bainbridge—Com. Shaw left in command—Organization of the Navy Board—Increase and improvement of the Navy—Employment of ships on various stations—Death of Com. Perry—Death of Com. Decatur.

THE proclamation of the treaty of peace between the United States and Great Britain, was issued by President Madison on the 18th of February, 1815. On the 23d of the same month, the President transmitted to the House of Representatives, a report from Mr. Monroe, secretary of state, on the relations of the United States to the Barbary powers. On the same day the President also recommended to Congress "the expediency of an act declaring the existence of a state of war between the United States and the Dey of Algiers: and of such provisions as may be requisite for a vigorous prosecution of it to a successful issue." Congress complied with this recommendation, and declared war. The aggressions of Algiers date back to the year in which war was declared against Great Britain; but as American commerce was entirely shut out of the Mediterranean in consequence of that war, and as an adequate naval force could not be sent to that sea, nor operate safely against both Algiers and the British cruisers, it was neither important nor possible, at that time, to take notice of the hostile proceedings.

The spirit of the Dey of Algiers was sufficiently manifest from his acts. In the month of July, 1812, he pretended to take offence at the quality and quantity of certain military stores which were sent him by the United States in accordance with the treaty of 1795. He refused to receive the stores. He threatened to imprison the American consul-general, and to make slaves of all Americans in his dominions; and by these threats, extorted from the consul a large sum of money, which he claimed as arrears of treaty stipulations, but which the United States denied to be due. And in the end, he compelled the consul and all Americans suddenly to leave the country, much to the injury of their affairs, and in plain violation of the existing treaty.

He then extended his aggressions to the sea. On the 25th of August,

an Algerine corsair captured the American brig Edwin, of Salem, Captain George Smith, bound from Malta to Gibraltar. The brig was taken into Algiers as a prize, and the captain and his crew, consisting of ten men, were retained as captives.

A vessel, bearing the Spanish flag, was seized and condemned in the port of Algiers, on the pretence of being an American vessel. In this vessel was an American citizen, Mr. Pollard of Virginia, who was also retained as a captive.

Efforts were made to redeem these captives, the government offering for ransom as high as three thousand dollars per man. But the Dey refused to accept the offer, and avowed his intention of increasing as much as possible the number of his captives, in order to compel the United States to come to his own terms. It was thus manifest that the Dey had ventured upon a violation of the treaty for the satisfaction of his own rapacity, probably led on by the plausible hope of impunity, inasmuch as the United States were involved in a war with the most mighty maritime power of the world. There is also sufficient evidence for the belief, that agents of the British government incited him to this course, flattering him with the assurance that in a short time the armed vessels of the United States would be swept from the ocean. The wars of continental Europe had almost entirely destroyed the commerce of all the states but Britain. Her triumphant naval power afforded a free ocean to her merchant fleets. She could afford to pay tribute to the Barbary pirates, while their depredations made commerce unsafe under the flag of weaker maritime nations, and thus threw into her own hands the great proportion of the trade which was subject to these exposures. Her statesmen by no means feared these small African states, but they humored and endured them for their own national profit. Her navy, which had in these very seas, off the Nile and off Trafalgar, won the most brilliant renown and indisputable supremacy, would have deemed it a mere incidental skirmish to drive every freebooting corsair from the highway of commerce, and to compel these lawless powers to be most timid and faithful observers of the laws of nations: but this would not have been politic. These long-indulged pirates could be advantageously used to frighten feeble nations from the track, over which British commerce might pass unmolested. And the humiliation of tribute was but a small price for such an advantage. This charge of mercenary selfishness must be admitted in order to account for England's long endurance of such an annoyance and outrage. It was far more of an annoyance and an injury to others than it was to her; she could therefore contemplate it with considerable complacency. The great competitor with her for the trade of the world had, for some time, been the United States. The motive, therefore, was strong and enticing for inducing a rupture between this competitor and the Barbary powers, at a time when the distant government in America could, by no display of force, protect its assailed commerce.

As soon, however, as the war with Great Britain was concluded by a satisfactory peace, the American government turned its attention to the work of reopening the important avenue for our commerce, which stretched along under the very citadels of these treacherous Algerines. It

took the most efficient means to punish their perfidy, and to enforce respect for its treaties and accredited representatives.

The peace had left the entire navy at the disposal of the government for this purpose. And after all the losses, hazards, and casualties of the late struggle, there was still an effective force fully adequate to the proposed undertaking. Orders were promptly issued for fitting out two squadrons, one at Boston under Commodore Bainbridge, and another at New York under Commodore Decatur. Com. Bainbridge was appointed commander-in-chief of the united squadrons. The selection of these two officers for this service was peculiarly appropriate. It was an honor deserved by both, in view of their distinguished achievements in the war just closed. It was, moreover, an act of wisdom and policy to appoint to the command, officers whose names could not but recall to the memories of the rulers of these predatory states, the former prowess and successes of the Americans on this same coast, and whose previous acquaintance would qualify them more perfectly to deal with these old enemies, either in arms or in negotiations.

The second division of the main squadron was first ready for sea. Decatur, honorably acquitted of all fault in the loss of the President in the January preceding, and honored with this mark of the continued confidence of the government, proceeded to his command. The vessels under his orders were, the frigate *Guerriere* 44, Captain Lewis, on board which vessel the commodore hoisted his broad pennant; the frigate *Constellation* 36, Captain Charles Gordon; the frigate *Macedonian* 36, Captain Jacob Jones; sloop of war *Ontario* 22, Commander Jesse D. Elliott; brig *Epervier* 18, Lieutenant Commanding John Downes; brig *Firefly* 14, Lieut. Com. George W. Rodgers; brig *Flambeau* 12, Lieut. Com. J. B. Nicholson; brig *Spark* 12, Lieut. Com. T. Gamble; schooner *Spitfire* 11, Lieut. Com. A. J. Dallas; schooner *Torch* 10, Lieut. Com. W. Chauncey.

This squadron sailed from New York on the 20th of May, 1815. When a few days out, a gale was experienced, in which the brig *Firefly* was so unfortunate as to spring her masts, and was obliged to return to port for repairs. She afterward joined the squadron of Com. Bainbridge, and was in the Mediterranean under him.

Decatur stood directly across the Atlantic, making a rapid passage for a squadron. Considering it possible that the Algerine squadron might be cruising in the Atlantic, he cautiously approached the coast of Africa, speaking every vessel coming in his way, and seeking all the information attainable. His desire was to come upon the whole fleet by surprise; for the preparations had been so rapidly made, that no rumor of hostilities, and of the sailing of a naval force, had, as yet, reached Algiers. On the 15th of June, Decatur touched at Tangiers, and from the American consul, learned that the Algerine admiral had been off that port only the day before, and had sailed for Carthage, at which port he intended to touch.

He sailed, immediately on receiving this information, to the eastward, entering the Mediterranean with the whole squadron; a part, which had separated during heavy weather, joining off Gibraltar.

On the 17th of June, being off Cape de Gatte, a large vessel was

discovered, which was soon determined to be an Algerine frigate. Chase was given, but very cautiously, lest the Algerine should take the alarm, and escape. It is probable that the chase at first supposed the squadron to be English; for the suspicion could hardly have been formed of an American force of such a size being in these seas, just at the close of a long naval war with Great Britain. By a mistake of one of the vessels in hoisting American colors, the Algerine suddenly perceiving his danger, made sail in a most seaman-like style, and tried his sailing qualities to the utmost, in a strenuous effort to escape. The *Constellation* had the advantage in this part of the chase, and soon opened a distant fire. In obedience to a signal from the commodore, however, she sheered off, and the *Guerriere* passed between her and the Algerine, thus enabling the flag-ship to engage. This, *Decatur*, with his usual intrepidity and skill, effected by boldly running alongside, so as to decide the combat by a close action. As he was executing this manœuvre, the Algerine poured in upon the deck of the *Guerriere*, a sharp and effective discharge of musketry from his tops, by which four men were wounded. Notwithstanding this, *Decatur* still retained his fire, and steadily held on his course, until his whole broadside could bear. Then ensued one of those terrific discharges for which the American ships had become famous, and which had commenced and decided so many bloody encounters on the sea. This produced dreadful havoc on board the enemy, and was but feebly returned. Another broadside followed, which drove all the men below, with the exception of a few musketeers, who still gallantly continued the hopeless contest. A formal surrender was not yet made, and there was an evident attempt to escape. But the *Epervier*, light as she was in comparison with the heavy Algerine frigate, had been gallantly brought into action by Lieut. Com. Downes, and had opened her fire, which had an effect to check this attempt. The combat was now at an end, and *Decatur* took possession of the prize. She proved to be the frigate *Mashouda*, of 46 guns, with a crew of between four and five hundred men. She was commanded by Admiral Rais Hammida, who held the highest rank in the navy of the Dey of Algiers. The running fight continued about twenty-five minutes. The loss on board the *Mashouda* was considerable; the prisoners stated that about thirty were killed, and thrown overboard. Four hundred and six of the crew were taken prisoners. The Admiral, Hammida, was killed in the commencement of the action on the part of the *Guerriere*, being cut in two by a heavy shot, on the quarter-deck of his ship. His death appeared to discourage his crew, and as a consequence, the contest was decided more speedily than it would otherwise have been. He was a man of great personal valor, and had fought his way up from the position of a common sailor to the command of the fleet. He possessed a spirit which would have impelled him to defend his ship to the very last effort of despair.

A very sad casualty occurred on board the *Guerriere* during the broadside firing. A gun on the main-deck bursted on its first discharge, breaking up the spar-deck, killing five men, and badly wounding and burning about thirty others. A piece of the bursting gun passed close by the head of Lieutenant John T. Shubrick, but did him no injury. *Decatur* warmly commended the steadiness of the men during this

accident, of a nature so likely to produce confusion, and he anxiously urged upon the government the exceeding importance of a more thorough testing of the guns. This explosion did far more damage than was effected by the fire of the enemy. A prize officer and crew were put on board the captured vessel, and she was sent into Carthage, under convoy of the Macedonian.

After this successful opening of the war, Decatur still continued his search for the main fleet. On the 19th of June, off Cape Palos, a brig, showing plain signs of being an Algerine corsair, was seen and chased for three hours. She ran into shoal water, where it was not safe for the larger vessels to follow her. Decatur directed the *Eprevier*, *Spark*, *Torch*, and *Spitfire* to continue the chase. They soon opened their fire, when the Algerines ran their brig aground, and after a short resistance, surrendered. The vessel was called the *Estedio*, carrying 22 guns, and one hundred and eighty men. On boarding her, twenty-three men were found dead, and eighty were taken prisoners. The rest escaped in boats to the shore: one boat, however, was sunk in the attempt, by shot from the vessels. The brig was got off, and was also sent into Carthage as a prize.

Having learned that notice of his arrival in the Mediterranean had been sent to Algiers, and also to the rest of the Algerine fleet, in consequence of which it had taken refuge in Malta, Decatur concluded that this would be the most favorable and promising juncture for him to appear before Algiers, and try the virtue of his powers as negotiator.

Commodores Bainbridge and Decatur, in connection with William Shaler, Esq., consul-general to the Barbary powers, had been appointed commissioners to negotiate a treaty of peace with the Dey of Algiers.

As Mr. Shaler was with Com. Decatur, the majority of the commission were at liberty to take advantage of favorable circumstances, without waiting for the arrival of Com. Bainbridge. On the 28th of June, the squadron rode at anchor in the bay of Algiers. It may be supposed that its formidable appearance awakened both surprise and apprehension in the breast of the Dey. He saw its power, but he had not yet heard of its successes. Little did he imagine that his favorite admiral was killed, and his best ship was a prize. The captain of the port and the Swedish consul came on board. To them Decatur delivered a letter from the President to the Dey, in which complaints were made of the faithless violations of the former treaty, and the barbarous aggressions against the persons and property of American citizens, on the part of the Algerine government. The letter further expressed the hope of an amicable adjustment of difficulties, without a continuance of war, otherwise the utmost power of the government would be exerted to bring the Dey to terms. The captain of the port was also now first informed of the captures, the account of which was confirmed to his satisfaction by the prisoners on board. The letter, the force which was on hand to sustain its doctrines, the losses already experienced and keenly felt, soon induced in the Dey a more humble and conciliatory spirit and demeanor, than he was accustomed to manifest toward the representatives of foreign powers. He sent an invitation to the commissioners to visit him at his palace, and there to make arrangements for a final settlement. His policy was to enter into a protracted course of negotiations, in order to gain time, during which he

might take advantage of some more favorable change in his affairs. Such delays Decatur wisely determined to avoid. He had the power to obtain the recognition of American rights, and he knew that naught but sheer power could gain the respect of this half-civilized despot. The commissioners, after consultation, refused to go on shore, and declared to the captain of the port and the Swedish consul, who were authorized to act for the Dey, that negotiations must be carried on on board the *Guerriere*. They also presented the draft of a treaty, to which they declared the Dey must assent, and the stipulations of which would not be essentially altered. In fine, they would have his majesty understand that they were to dictate the terms of peace, and not he. This was high ground to take in treating with these states; but it could be, and was, maintained.

The captain of the port now desired that at least hostilities should cease while negotiations were going on. To this request Decatur promptly replied, "Not a minute; if your squadron appears in sight before the treaty is actually signed by the Dey, and sent off with the American prisoners, *ours will capture it.*"

After further discussion, and some slight alterations in the terms, the agents of the Dey carried the treaty on shore to obtain his consent and signature. In the mean time, a corsair hove in sight, coming in toward the harbor, close under the shore. True to his word, that hostilities should not cease until the treaty was assented to, Decatur made signal for the squadron to chase. This movement of the fleet hastened matters on shore, for soon the boat, with a white flag, was seen coming off. It had been agreed that this should be the signal that the treaty was really signed. When discovered, therefore, making all haste toward the *Guerriere*, Decatur felt obliged to order the chase to be relinquished.

This treaty secured for the Americans advantages, in some points, over all other nations, and in all respects placed them on a footing with the most favored. Its principal articles provided, that no more tribute should be paid; that no Americans should be enslaved; that all American vessels should be treated hospitably, and their wants relieved in Algerine ports; that the neutrality of the Algerine ports should be maintained in case of war; and that, generally, the Regency should subject itself to the recognized law of nations. The captives held at the time were also given up, and sent on board the flag-ship.

The prizes, which Decatur had made, were given back to the Dey, at his most urgent request, as it was found that they required considerable repairs in order to be sent home, and especially because it was urged that such restoration of the vessels would go far toward reconciling the people to a treaty, which withdrew so many of their long-allowed privileges. The Dey was but a late usurper, and sat quite uneasily on his throne. It was policy for the United States to strengthen his position with his people, as this would be more likely to insure the observance of an obnoxious treaty. A little of the secret history of this despotic court is revealed in the remark of the Dey's prime minister to the British consul, while this work of justice was going on,—“You told us that the Americans would be swept from the seas in six months by your navy, and now they make war upon us with some of your own vessels, which they have taken from you!”

Thus, by decision and firmness, justified by the advantages gained and at command, Decatur, in the space of twenty-four hours from his arrival, had in his hands a treaty such as had never been obtained from any of the Barbary powers by any of the great nations of Europe. This had been accomplished in forty days from the time of his departure from New York. In the close of their dispatch to the government, transmitting the treaty, Decatur and Shaler say,—“As this treaty appears to us to secure every interest within the contemplation of the government, and as it really places the United States on higher grounds than any other nation, we have no hesitation, on our part, in fulfilling such of its provisions as are within our power, in the firm belief that it will receive the ratification of the President and Senate.”

Decatur deemed it advisable to send home one of his vessels with the treaty, and an account of his cruise thus far. He selected the brig *Epervier* for this service, and gave the command of her to John Templer Shubrick, the first lieutenant of the *Guerriere*. Captain Lewis was desirous of returning home, and obtained leave. This left a vacancy in Decatur's own ship, to fill which he transferred Captain Downes from the *Epervier*. The latter vessel sailed immediately on these changes, and the termination of her voyage is, up to the present time, wrapt in mystery. She passed Gibraltar about the 12th of July. A brig, resembling her, was seen by a British West-India fleet, during a very heavy gale, and in a position where she might have been; but no distinct information has ever been gained respecting her. In her were lost, Captain Lewis, Lieutenant Neale, Lieut. Yarnall, Lieut. Drury, and other officers, and also the captives who had been just rescued from Algerine servitude, and were embracing this early opportunity to return home. Lieut. Shubrick's appointment to this command was an evidence of Decatur's high appreciation of his character as an officer. He had served much under Decatur, having now been steadily with him on board the *United States*, the President during the cruise in which she was taken, by the British, and the *Guerriere* during the present cruise. With him an untimely end terminated a highly honorable career.

With the prestige of this complete and rapid success, Decatur now proceeded to visit the other Barbary states, in order to apply the same effectual remedy to certain evils and wrongs, which had arisen in their relations to Americans. He appeared in the Bay of Tunis on the 26th of July. Here the American consul, M. M. Noah, Esq., laid before him an account of certain wrongs, and requested his interposition for their redress. It appears that during the war with Great Britain, an American armed brig, the *Abellino*, had captured an English merchant brig and schooner, which she carried as prizes into the neutral port of Tunis. While they were lying in this port, and under the protection of the cannon of the Bey of Tunis, the English brig of war *Lyra* ran in, cut them out, and carried them to Malta, thus boldly violating the neutrality of the port. The Bey took no measures to resist this aggression, but quietly suffered it, undoubtedly receiving in some form an adequate remuneration for his indifference to his own rights, and to the insult offered to his own independence. The influence of British agents near his person was felt here also, as well as at Algiers.

When the facts were properly set forth and established, Decatur decided upon his course with characteristic promptness. He sent a communication to the Bey, by the hands of the consul, stating the facts as they had been recited to him, and demanding full indemnity within the space of twelve hours, under penalty of a declaration of war and an immediate attack. Mr. Noah landed and was admitted to an audience. His interview with the Bey he thus relates—"‘Tell your Admiral to come and see me,’ said the Bey. ‘He declines coming, your Highness, until these disputes are settled, which are best done on board ship.’ ‘But this is not treating me with becoming dignity. Hamuda Pacha, of blessed memory, commanded them to land, and wait at the palace, until he was pleased to receive them.’ ‘Very likely, your Highness, but that was twenty years ago.’ After a pause, the Bey exclaimed, ‘I know this Admiral; he is the same one who, in the war with Sida Yusef of Trablis, burnt the frigate.’ ‘The same.’ ‘Hum! why do they send wild young men to treat for peace with old powers? Then you Americans do not speak the truth. You went to war with England, a nation with a great fleet, and said you took their frigates in equal fight. Honest people always speak truth.’ ‘Well, Sir, that was true. Do you see that tall ship in the bay, with a blue flag, the *Guerriere*, taken from the British? That one near the small island, the *Macedonian*, was also captured, by Decatur, on equal terms. The sloop near Cape Carthage, the *Peacock*, was also taken in battle.’ The Bey laid down the telescope, reposed on his cushions, and with a small tortoise-shell comb, set with diamonds, combed his beard. A small vessel got under way and came near the batteries: a pinnace, with a few men, rowed toward the harbor, and one person, dressed in the garb of a sailor, was taking soundings. It was Decatur."

After this conversation and due meditation, the Bey very wisely announced his willingness to repay the owners the value of the retaken vessels and their cargoes. Decatur then landed, and paid his respects to the Bey. The money claimed, forty-six thousand dollars, was paid in his presence to the agent of the owners. This accomplished, Decatur, on the 5th of August, showed his squadron before the stern old batteries of Tripoli, with the features of which he was so perfectly familiar. With commendable pride might he survey this field, whereon had been gained the early brightness of his renown. That reputation was now of service to his country—it aided the display of physical force. Here there was a similar transaction to that at Tunis to be attended to. The *Abellino* had also taken two prizes into this port, under the presumption of an efficient neutrality. But the British brig *Paulina*, acting on either the weakness or the willingness of the Bashaw, violated his neutral rights, and retook the prizes from under his own eyes.

The usual demand having been made, the Bashaw at first quite boldly refused to comply with it. He even took steps for a forcible resistance, drawing out his cavalry upon the shore and manning his batteries. All this did not move Decatur from his purpose, but merely led him to begin his disposition of forces for a regular attack. The memories of the past did not serve to stimulate the courage of the Bashaw, especially the fact that Decatur was the commander of the fleet now assuming a hostile

attitude in that same bay which had been illuminated by the lurid flames of the burning Philadelphia, and where even Moslem fanaticism had proved no match for American valor. So the Bashaw concluded to allow his valor to practice the lessons of his discretion, and to yield gracefully while the opportunity for such a demeanor continued. He paid the claim of twenty-five thousand dollars, and gave assurances of better conduct for the future. Decatur also had the pleasure of restoring to liberty ten captives, two of whom were Danish boys, and the rest a Sicilian family.

It was now about seventy days since the squadron left New York, and the objects of the cruise had been fully accomplished in this short space of time. The actual fighting had been very little, and the loss on our part trifling. These results are to be ascribed in part to the efficiency and decision of Decatur; yet the best qualities in a commander would have been of little avail without an adequate naval force to sustain him. The mere display of physical power is ever more conclusive, beyond all comparison, with semi-civilized states, than all moral considerations and unsupported reasonings on justice.

It is honorable to the United States that they first placed an effectual restraint upon the intolerable encroachments of these faithless powers; that they compelled the recognition of their maritime rights without the continuance of tribute; and insisted, with the needful firmness, upon the careful observance of treaties. The example thus given was soon followed by England and other European powers, until these small states, once regarded with so much terror, and indulged in their haughty address toward their superiors in every element of national honor and greatness, have declined into their proper insignificance.

The squadron under the command of Commodore Bainbridge, which followed the one under Decatur, arrived in the Mediterranean in the early part of August. It consisted of the Independence 74, which had been just finished at Boston under the superintendence of Bainbridge; the frigate Congress; the sloop of war Erie; the brig Chippewa; and the schooner Lynx. Another detachment, composed of the frigate United States, the brigs Boxer, Saranac, Firefly, and Enterprise, under the command of Commodore John Shaw, joined the main squadron shortly after. On his arrival at Gibraltar, Bainbridge of course learned that his energetic predecessor had accomplished all the objects of the expedition. He therefore proceeded, in accordance with his instructions, to exhibit his force off Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, that he might furnish the most convincing demonstration of the ability and readiness of the United States to protect their commerce and their agents. Interested persons had induced the belief among these ignorant people, that the United States were bound by treaty with Great Britain, not to build any seventy-four gun ships. The first vessel of this class in our navy, indeed, which was ever taken to sea, was the Independence, Bainbridge's flag-ship on this cruise. Her presence in these waters, therefore, was of consequence, as it dissipated this false belief; and this large fleet, following so soon in the wake of Decatur's, impressed these governments and their people with the power and resources of the United States, and contributed decidedly to the maintenance of peace, and the strict observance of treaties. Since this active and successful expedition, our relations with the Barbary powers

have, with slight exceptions, been highly satisfactory. It was necessary, however, for several of the immediately subsequent years, to maintain an efficient force in these waters, and by regular visits to their ports, to remind these new friends that they were under a close surveillance.

On leaving Tripoli, Decatur sailed across to Sicily, where he landed the family he had rescued from captivity, and thence kept along the coast of Italy to Naples. All the rest of the squadron were directed to join Bainbridge, while he followed, more at his leisure, with the *Guerriere*. During the voyage from Italy to Spain, he fell in with the remainder of the Algerine fleet, consisting of four frigates and three sloops, which had escaped him during the war. Thinking that they might be tempted to retaliate, in spite of the treaty, now that they found him alone, he ordered his ship cleared for action, and the men beat to quarters. Thus prepared, he stood steadily on, and passed the whole fleet unmolested. As he passed the admiral's ship, he was hailed with the usual question, "Where are you bound?" He himself took the trumpet, and discarding nautical etiquette with his old foes and even yet uncertain friends, quite in defiance answered, "Where I please!"

In October, the entire naval force was assembled under Commodore Bainbridge at Gibraltar. It formed the largest fleet that had ever been collected under the American flag, comprising one two-decked ship, the *Independence*, five frigates, the *Guerriere*, *Macedonian*, *Constellation*, *Congress*, and *United States*, two sloops of war, seven brigs, and three schooners—in all eighteen sail. This was rather an unexpected sight beneath the rock of Gibraltar, but a few months after the close of the English war.

The purpose, for which this large force had been sent out, having been effected, it became necessary for the commander to make a new disposition of it. Decatur took the *Guerriere* home, arriving at New York on the 12th of November. Bainbridge also sailed for home, taking with him his own ship, two frigates, and all the brigs and schooners. Commodore Shaw remained in command of the Mediterranean squadron, composed of the frigates *United States* 44, the *Constellation* 38, and the sloops *Ontario* and *Erie*, each 18. In a short time also, Captain O. H. Perry, in the *Java* 44, joined the latter squadron. Bainbridge brought his squadron safely into Newport on the 15th of November. In his letter of instructions to Com. Shaw, Com. Bainbridge says: "The object of leaving this force is to watch the conduct of the Barbary powers, particularly that of Algiers, to guard against, as far as the force under your command can do, any depredations they may be disposed to commit, and to give protection to the commerce of the citizens of the United States." Com. Shaw executed these duties with fidelity, until the next year, when Com. Chauncey, in the *Washington* 74, was sent out to relieve him.

The necessity of a more thorough organization of the Navy Department had long been felt, and it was especially desirable that its executive administration should be in the charge of individuals, whose professional experience qualified them for its practical duties. To meet this necessity, Congress, in 1815, authorized the formation of a board of navy commissioners. This board was placed under the superintendence of the

secretary of the navy, and was charged with all the ministerial duties of the department, relating to the procuring of supplies and stores, the collection of materials, the construction, armament, and employment of all the vessels. Commodores Rodgers, Hull and Porter were appointed the first commissioners.

After the close of the war with Great Britain, an arrangement was effected between that country and the United States, by which the naval forces of both, on the lakes, were reduced to an equality. It was agreed that neither nation should maintain more than one vessel of war on Lake Ontario or Lake Champlain, or more than two vessels on Lake Erie or any of the upper lakes, and that each of these vessels should carry but one gun.

There was also, about this time, a very strong disposition manifested, both in and out of Congress, to effect a still greater reduction of the navy, to lay most of the vessels up, to place the officers on half-pay, and to dismiss some of the officers of each grade. Some steps were taken toward carrying out this destructive plan, but the influence of more judicious friends of the navy prevailed, and the general scheme was abandoned. On the other hand, the character which had been so nobly won by this arm of the national service in the late war with England, had established the conviction, with the great mass of the nation, of the necessity of its permanent existence as a part of the means of government, especially so in the relations of government to foreign states. A system was consequently framed for the improvement, and the gradual increase of the navy, which system has been pursued, since that time, with such emendations as enlarged experience and progressive science have suggested. The plan for this gradual increase, in connection with a special act of the session of 1819-20, contemplated the formation of a force of twelve line-of-battle ships, fourteen first-class frigates, three second-class frigates, six sloops, and a proper proportion of smaller vessels. The details of this plan have been carried out, in a good degree, respecting the larger vessels, while subsequent enactments have added largely to the number of the sloops, and somewhat to that of the brigs and schooners.

In a time of prolonged peace, the services of the national vessels must be mainly directed toward the protection of commerce in the various seas which invite it. With but few exceptions, this has been the occupation of our navy since the close of the war with Great Britain, and the settlement of our difficulties with the Barbary powers. For some years after the period mentioned, it was necessary to maintain a careful watch over the interests of commerce in the Mediterranean, since nothing but the knowledge of the presence of a strong force could restrain the predatory disposition of the inhabitants of the northern coast of Africa; and during the war between the Turks and the Greeks, this disposition did break forth into overt acts against the vessels of some nations. Several ships have generally cruised along our own coast, and in emergencies a squadron of some size has been retained on this duty. For a few years a considerable force was engaged in the West Indies, in an exterminating war upon bands of pirates, who abounded there; some account of which will be hereafter given. From about 1820, some vessels have been stationed

along the western coast of Africa, to coöperate with the cruisers of England in the attempt to suppress the slave-trade. The Pacific has also been a regular cruising ground for a portion of the national marine, where, especially during the revolutions of the South American States, it has rendered essential service in the way of protecting our commercial rights. In 1816, it was determined to send a ship of war to the Pacific, to take formal possession of the country about the Columbia river, to collect information that might be useful to commercial operations, and to give protection to those which had already been undertaken there by our citizens. The frigate Congress, Captain Morris, was directed to be prepared for this service, in August, 1816. When nearly ready for sea, her destination was changed to the Gulf of Mexico, to protect our commerce against any improper interference by the cruisers of the revolutionary governments bordering on the gulf, and on the Caribbean sea.

The Ontario sloop of war, Captain Biddle, having landed agents of the government at Rio de Janeiro, proceeded to the Pacific. After touching at the ports of Valparaiso and Lima, where Captain Biddle rendered essential services to American vessels and citizens, and exemplified in a striking manner the importance of a naval force in foreign ports, he proceeded to Columbia river, and, in August, 1818, took formal possession of the country in the name and in behalf of the United States.

The coast of Brazil, also, has for many years been deemed a regular station. In 1819, Commodore Perry was ordered to the command of the squadron on this station, being also intrusted with the discharge of certain delicate diplomatic duties. The Constellation was intended for his flag-ship, but not being ready for sea, and the object of his appointment requiring dispatch, he sailed in the sloop of war John Adams. Arrived off the mouth of the Orinoco, he transferred his pennant to the schooner Nonsuch, and ascended the river to Angostura, where he was detained several days in executing the duties of his mission. This was in midsummer, and during the most sickly part of the season. He contracted the yellow fever, and died as the schooner was approaching his own ship, on the 23d of August; he being just thirty-four years of age. He was appointed a midshipman in April, 1799. His remains were interred at Port Spain, but were afterward brought home in a ship of war, and deposited in the soil of his native state, Rhode Island. Upon the receipt of the news of the death of Com. Perry, Com. Morris was directed to proceed with the Constellation and John Adams to the Rio de la Plata, and perform the duties connected with the government of Buenos Ayres, which had been originally assigned to the former officer; having done which, he returned to the United States in May, 1820.

But a few months after the death of Perry, the navy experienced another severe loss, the attending circumstances of which were so melancholy, as to affect the entire nation with painful emotions. The event, which thus awakened general regret and grief, was the death of Com. Stephen Decatur, occasioned by a wound received in a duel with Com. James Barron. It will be remembered that Com. Barron had been suspended from the service for five years, in consequence of his conduct in connection with the attack of the Leopard on the Chesapeake in 1807. During his suspension he engaged in mercantile business, and remained

away from his country throughout the war with Great Britain. On his return, and some time after the close of the war, he sought a command according to his rank in the navy. Com. Decatur opposed his application, and expressed his opinion very freely respecting Barron's absence during the war, and his subsequent conduct. Reports, as usual in such a case, incorrectly representing Decatur's language and feelings, were conveyed to Barron's ears, and led to a correspondence between them, which was opened by Barron in June, 1819, and continued at intervals for several months, and up to the time of their hostile meeting. The course of this correspondence evinced increased exasperation of feeling on both sides; Decatur still reiterating his opinion, that Barron had rendered himself unworthy of his station in the navy, and of the privilege of honorable service; and Barron, while defending himself against Decatur's severe charges, refusing to explain to his antagonist the real cause of his remaining abroad, while his country was engaged in a war to so great an extent maritime in its character. It afterward appeared that pecuniary embarrassment was the real reason of Barron's singular conduct. Had this been known, the generous Decatur would have been the last person to taunt a fellow-officer, who had already endured so much as Barron had. The correspondence, however, led to a challenge from Barron to Decatur; both yielding to the bloody and barbarous maxims of a most fallacious code of honor, which they admitted was repulsive to their moral sentiments and better feelings. Com. Elliot was selected by Barron as his second, and Com. Bainbridge appeared on behalf of Decatur. The arrangements having been very quietly made, the parties met early on the morning of the 22d of March, 1820, between Washington and Bladensburg, near the latter place. When they had taken their positions, and were ready to fire, Barron said to Decatur, "I hope, on meeting in another world, we will be better friends;" and Decatur replied, "I have never been your enemy, sir." Com. Bainbridge gave the word to fire, and both pistols went off at the same instant. The two antagonists fell, Barron being severely wounded in the hip, and Decatur having received a mortal wound in the abdomen. As they lay upon the ground, Decatur exclaimed, "I am mortally wounded, at least I believe so, and wish I had fallen in defence of my country." Barron, also considering his wound mortal, remarked that he "forgave his enemy from the bottom of his heart." Decatur was then removed to his residence in Washington, and lingered in great agony until half-past ten o'clock in the evening, when he expired. He was but forty-one years of age, and had spent twenty-two years of his life in the naval service, his warrant as a midshipman bearing the date of April 30th, 1798. Without detracting from the high merit of other officers, there were certain very favorable circumstances in the history of Perry and Decatur, which rendered them peculiar favorites with the entire nation; and their death, occurring in the very prime of their days, and with attending incidents of a very aggravating character, was felt with universal and keen regret and sorrow.

CHAPTER II.

Mexican and South American Revolutions—Paper blockades—Piracies in the West Indies—Vessels ordered there—Captures by Lieutenants Kearney and Ramage—Com. Biddle sent with an increased force—Captures by Lieut. Gregory—Death of Lieut. Allen—Alligator wrecked—Captures by Capt. Cassin—Difficulty of suppressing piracies—Com. Porter takes the command—Affair at St. John's—Arrangement of Com. Porter's force—Various captures by Captain Cassin, Lieuts. Stribling, Newell, Watson, Kearney, Skinner and Paine—Affair at Foxardo and Porter's recall—Com. Warrington supersedes him—Loss of the Ferret—Captures by Lieuts. Sloat and McKeever—Suppression of the system of piracy.

THE example of the North American colonies, in their successful struggle for independence of English rule, in time extended its influence to the colonies of Spain. A relaxation in the vigor of her tyranny, compelled by the dread of this example, did not hinder the spread of free ideas throughout these distant dependencies. When the contest came, it was marked by an energy and a determination on the part of the colonies, which finally resulted in wresting from the crown of Spain her most extensive and valuable possessions on this continent. This series of revolutions necessarily produced a serious interference with the regular course of commerce; and this consequence the United States quickly and deeply felt. The hindrance to commercial intercourse arose from two different sources—the establishment of blockades and the ravages of pirates. The right of belligerents to blockade each other's ports, our government never disputed. But in vindication of the rights of neutrals, it maintained that the blockade should be actual and effectual; that an adequate naval force should be present to enforce it, and to render it hazardous in a merchant ship to disregard it. It will be remembered that our government had been so strenuous regarding this principle, as to maintain it by force against both France and Great Britain. Spain, unable to enforce a strict blockade, now sought to establish one along an extended line of sea-board, by mere proclamation. This paper blockade of course damaged our shipping interests, inasmuch as vessels relying upon the American doctrine on the subject, disregarded a proclamation which was not supported by an actual adequate force. The Spanish cruisers and privateers, though unable to prevent this practice by effectually guarding the proscribed ports, were able occasionally to capture an American ship, which had broken this paper blockade, and were even in the habit of making captures on the suspicion of such an intention. It became necessary, therefore, for the government to order to the West Indies a squadron capable of preventing such proceedings against our commerce, and of showing its continued determination to resist the application of this loose principle of blockade. The display of our naval force, sustaining the reasoning of our diplomatic protests, was fully successful in accomplishing the object in view. Our doctrine was admitted by the Spanish authorities, and American merchantmen pursued their course, without regarding imaginary blockades.

But the matter of piracy involved evils not so easily managed, and remedied. The unsettled state of affairs, internal revolutions, feeble

governments, a low state of morality in surrounding communities, and the debasing influence of war — all these characteristics of the times and regions conspired to foster a system of piratical enterprises in the West Indies. It is unnecessary to describe the details of this dark and destructive system. Vessels were plundered, then sent adrift, burnt, or taken possession of, as fancy or interest dictated; the officers, crews and passengers were always treated with indignity and violence, very frequently murdered in cold blood, and in some instances, their bodies after death were abused with disgusting barbarity, after cruelty had exhausted ingenuity in contrivances of insupportable torture. Indeed, the worst imaginable scenes connected with the idea of piracy, were realities in the career of these lawless bands. It must not be understood that every instance was thus marked with every possible horror; but that the enormities mentioned formed a fearful proportion to the ordinary outrages of these miscreants. Some of the freebooters seemed intent only on plunder, and took the steps necessary to their object with quite commendable decorum. The majority delighted in the opportunity to gratify more bloody and cruel dispositions, and when rapacity had been satisfied, or hindered in its desires, they gave way to the demands of fiercer passions. Repeated reports of such outrages, committed on our very borders, at a time of peace, when seamen expected no more than the usual perils of the ocean, soon awakened not only the fears but the indignation of the nation. Merchant ships were armed to some extent, and in some instances successfully repelled the attacks of pirates. But this was insufficient. Government was called upon to afford protection, and promptly responded to the call. Yet in estimating the credit due to the government and the navy, on account of their exertions in this service, we must remember that it required time and experience to discover the best mode of operating against the pirates, and that our entire naval force could not be safely or wisely directed against this single evil. This must account for the time which it actually took finally and fully to suppress these lawless aggressions.

In the fall of 1821, the first accounts of piracies were received in the United States. The administration immediately took measures to capture and bring to punishment the offenders. The sloop of war *Hornet*, brigs *Enterprise* and *Spark*, and schooners *Shark*, *Porpoise* and *Grampus*, with three gun-boats, were ordered to sail directly on this service.

On the 16th of October, 1821, Lieutenant Kearney, commanding the *Enterprise*, while cruising off Cape Antonio, Cuba, discovered four piratical vessels in the act of plundering three American vessels which they had just captured. They were quite in shore in shoal water, where the brig could not venture. Five boats were, therefore, sent in pursuit. The pirates being hard pressed, set fire to and burnt two schooners. The detachment, however, succeeded in capturing two schooners, and one sloop, together with some forty pirates. The brig then carried her prisoners into Charleston, to be tried under an act of Congress, passed in 1819, for the punishment of the crime of piracy.

On the 29th of October, the *Hornet*, Captain Robert Henly, captured a schooner named the *Moscow*, which he sent into Norfolk. On the 21st of December, Lieut. Kearney captured a schooner of about thirty-six

tons, but the crew, consisting of twenty-five men, escaped. He also destroyed the rendezvous of the pirates at Cape Antonio.

On the 7th of January, 1822, Lieutenant Ramage, commanding the schooner *Porpoise*, attacked and captured six piratical vessels on the north coast of Cuba. He burnt five of them, and manned the remaining one for the purpose of cruising against the pirates, three of whom were taken prisoners. He also landed forty men, under Lieut. Curtis, who drove the pirates to the woods and broke up their depot. This was accomplished without loss on the part of the assailants, while the loss of the enemy must have been severe, though it could not be ascertained.

On the 6th of March, Lieut. Kearney, of the *Enterprise*, made another large capture off Cape Antonio. It consisted of three launches and four barges, with their crews, numbering about one hundred and sixty men. These were the principal captures effected by the first squadron sent out.

These successes of the cruisers gave but a slight check to the operations of the freebooters. They still committed their depredations to an alarming extent. More efficient measures were consequently adopted. Com. James Biddle was ordered to take command of the West India squadron, having as his flag-ship the frigate *Macedonian*. An addition of two hundred marines was also made to the force. The *Macedonian* proceeded to her station in the month of April, 1822. The squadron in these seas, during this year, consisted of the *Macedonian* 36; the frigate *Congress* 36; sloops of war *John Adams* 24, and *Peacock* 18; brig *Spark* 12; schooners *Alligator*, *Grampus*, *Shark* and *Porpoise*, each carrying twelve guns. The *Enterprise* was at home, refitting. The principal portion of these vessels was engaged directly in the suppression of piracy, while the remainder was occupied in the general protection of commerce, and in furnishing convoy to merchantmen. On the 16th of August, 1822, Lieut. Gregory, commanding the *Grampus*, gave chase to a brigantine. On being overtaken, the brig showed Spanish colors. But Lieut. Gregory, suspecting her to be a pirate, called upon her commander to surrender. This demand was replied to by a fire from cannon and small-arms. The *Grampus* now opened her fire in broadside, and in three minutes and a half the brig struck. When boarded she was found to be a complete wreck, with one man killed and six wounded. The *Grampus* sustained no injury. The prize proved to be the privateer *Palmira*, of Porto Rico, carrying one long brass eighteen, and eight 18lb. carronades, with a crew of eighty-eight men. The officers acknowledged that they had robbed the American schooner *Coquette*, complaint of which had been made to Lieut. Gregory. Though carrying the papers of a privateer, she was thus really doing the work of a pirate. And her capture was a warning to other privateers, which class of vessels had, before this time, in various ways, annoyed and interfered with American merchantmen.

During the month of November, in this year, the *Alligator*, commanded by Lieut. William H. Allen, was lying in the harbor of Matanzas, when information was brought on board, of late acts of piracy in the vicinity. Lieut. Allen, with great alacrity, immediately stood out of the bay, and sailed in pursuit. When about fifteen leagues from Matanzas, he came in sight of a piratical force, consisting of three well-armed vessels, carrying some three hundred men. They had five prize vessels in their possession.

The Alligator being unable to come up with them, an attack was made upon one of the vessels in boats; Lieut. Allen taking the lead. One of the pirates opened a heavy fire upon the boats, which continued for some time, as he was under way, and the boats had to pull hard to overtake him. Thus exposed they still pressed on; Allen's boat being considerably in advance of the others, and the gallant commander standing up, and encouraging his men in their exertions. While in this position he received a musket shot in the head, and, soon after, another in the breast, which, in a few hours, proved mortal. The pirates, however, did not wait to be boarded, but deserted their vessel, when they found themselves unable to drive off the boats. They escaped with their two other schooners, but the prizes were recaptured. In this action the loss of the Alligator was, besides Lieut. Allen, two men killed, and five wounded; two mortally. It was supposed that some fourteen of the pirates were killed. The schooner taken was armed with one long twelve, two long sixes, two long threes, and two swivels. The others were also fully armed and equipped.

Lieut. Allen had attained a high reputation in the navy, for so young an officer, as he was but thirty at the time of his death. He was the second lieutenant of the brig *Argus*, Captain Allen, when she was taken by the *Pelican*, on the coast of England, in 1813, and commanded throughout the latter part of the action, when both his superior officers had been carried below severely wounded. On this occasion he fought and manœvered the brig in the most gallant and skillful manner.

Shortly after this exploit, on the night of the 19th of November, the *Alligator* was wrecked on Carysford Reef. Her officers and crew were all saved.

On the 28th and 30th of September, of this year, five piratical vessels were captured by Captain S. Cassin, commanding the *Peacock*.

The vessels of the squadron acted with all possible efficiency on this difficult service; still, notwithstanding the captures made, these ravages upon our commerce, and outrages upon our citizens, were rather on the increase. The difficulties of thoroughly checking them could hardly be appreciated; and the impatience and dissatisfaction manifested through the public journals of the period, evince that they were not appreciated, even by the best informed. But few of the pirates kept the open sea, so as to fall in the way of the larger cruisers. This class of ships could, therefore, effect but little toward their extermination by regular sea-fights. The main portion of the pirates were established on the coast, in the more uninhabited parts of the various islands, and issued out from their retreats on short excursions, in small schooners, barges and boats. When found on shore, unless actually taken in the act of plunder and chased in, it was oftentimes difficult to find evidence to identify them as pirates, for to appearance they were but fishermen or landsmen. Others, still, were fitted out directly from some of the principal Spanish ports, and obtained their information, from friends on shore, as to the sailing of vessels, their cargoes, and other items of importance; and instances were not wanting, in which the connivance of the authorities was apparent to the least sagacious. The labor imposed upon the officers and seamen of our navy, was consequently to be performed very much in open boats, under a

tropical sun, and amid the intricacies and dangers of unknown coasts; and, when they were fortunate enough to drive any band of these barbarians on shore, they were not permitted by the Spanish authorities to pursue them on land; and, in case of a short pursuit, the pirates had the advantage of a local knowledge, through which they could find numerous ways of escape. It was apparent, then, that the force on this service, to be made efficient, must be both peculiar and numerous. With this idea, the government, in the commencement of the year 1823, fitted out an expedition which was more adequate in its construction and size to the emergency, than any preceding it. Commodore David Porter resigned his office as commissioner of the navy, in order to take command of this expedition. His personal attention was devoted to the selection of vessels, and their preparation for the service. The squadron, when fully organized, comprised the Steam Galliot *Sea Gull*; eight small schooners, viz.: the *Greyhound*, *Jackall*, *Fox*, *Wildcat*, *Beagle*, *Ferret*, *Weasel* and *Terrier*; the transport-ship *Decoy*; and five barges, viz.: the *Mosquito*, *Gnat*, *Midge*, *Sandfly* and *Gallinipper*. Besides these, the vessels already on the West India Station were the *John Adams*, *Peacock*, *Hornet*, *Spark*, *Grampus* and *Shark*.

Commodore Porter took his squadron to sea on the 14th of February, 1823. As great publicity had been given through the press to the preparation and constitution of this expedition, and the proximity of the United States to the scene of operations could not but favor the transmission of this published information, Com. Porter wisely judged that the pirates would undoubtedly change their ground as far as possible, and therefore an immediate cruise near their old haunts would be fruitless. He consequently sailed to the windward, intending first to touch at the island of St. Thomas. His broad pennant was hoisted on board the *Peacock*. Arrived off Porto Rico, he addressed a communication to the governor on the subject of the interruptions to our commerce on the coasts of Mexico and Colombia by Porto Rico privateers, and also on the subject of the blockade of these coasts. His presence and communications here resulted in the raising of the blockade of the main, which had nominally existed up to this time, and in effectually checking the system of licensed piracy, under the name of privateering, which had long been carried on from the ports of this island.

While off this island, a very unfortunate occurrence took place, in regard to which the conduct of the authorities was wholly indefensible. On the 3d of March, Commodore Porter dispatched the *Greyhound*, Capt. John Porter, into the port of St. John's, with the above-mentioned communication to the governor. On the 5th, he ordered Lieut. W. H. Cocke, in command of the *Fox*, to enter the same harbor, in order to ascertain the probabilities respecting an answer. As the latter was endeavoring to execute this order, he was killed by a shot from the castle, which suddenly opened a heavy fire upon the schooner, and obliged her to come to anchor under its guns. The only satisfaction offered for this insult and catastrophe was the plea, that the character of the squadron was suspected or not certainly understood, and therefore the commandant of the port had issued orders that no more of the vessels should be permitted to enter, until the arrival of the governor. Com. Porter ably refuted this

plea, in a letter to the governor, and immediately left the island, referring the whole matter to his government. There is reason to think that this hostile act was designed as a measure of retaliation for the capture of the *Palmira*, previously noticed.

Com. Porter now divided his force into small detachments, and in this way thoroughly scoured the coasts of all the islands to the north of Porto Rico, including St. Domingo and Cuba. Around the entire coast of this last island, piracies had been carried on to a vast extent. Every bay and inlet and key of all this region was thus carefully searched. Without doubt, the information conveyed to the pirates of the fitting out and departure of the expedition had thoroughly alarmed them, for the actual captures were by no means what might have been expected, had their hostile acts continued to the extent to which they had shortly before been prosecuted.

Com. Porter then proceeded to Thompson's island, now Key West, where he established a naval depot, and reassembled his squadron. This point he made the centre of his operations, and the rendezvous of his vessels after their short cruises. These vessels were kept constantly occupied, either furnishing convoy to the merchantmen passing in and out of the gulf, or chasing the pirates who occasionally dared to venture out. Piracy as a system was effectually broken up. Under date of April 24th, Com. Porter remarks: "I believe I can now say with safety, that there is not a pirate afloat on this part of the coast of Cuba, (the northern) larger than an open boat." On May 19th, he writes to the secretary of the navy to this effect: "I have the honor to inform you, that not a single piratical act has been committed on the coast of Cuba since I organized and arranged my forces."

It must be remembered that at this time there was also a considerable British force cruising on the same service, and that the Spanish authorities were also affording more efficient coöperation than formerly. There seemed, therefore, a cheering prospect that an end would soon be put to these crimes upon the high seas.

Still, the force under Com. Porter was so small for the service, that the labor imposed upon the officers and men was exceedingly onerous; performed, as most of it was, in small vessels and open boats, by day and by night, thus exposing them to the baneful influences of the climate, and the dangerous consequences of over-exertion. The willing endurance and unceasing vigilance manifested by all, were deserving of very high commendation.

The retreat of the pirates from the sea was soon followed by their appearance in a similar dangerous character on land. In the neighborhood of Matanzas they were especially bold and alarming, roaming over the country in large bands, fully armed, and plundering and murdering the unprotected inhabitants.

With this general view of the operations and benefits of the squadron, it may be interesting to connect a more detailed account of some of the most important captures.

Information being received of a suspicious looking vessel on the coast of Cuba, Capt. Cassin was ordered in search, taking with him the schooners *Fox* and *Jackall*, and the barges *Gallinipper* and *Mosquito*. He

went off Havana, and there offered convoy to a large fleet of merchantmen, while Lieut. Stribling, in the *Gallinipper*, was dispatched after the pirate. On the morning of the 8th of April, this officer discovered a schooner about three miles off, working in toward shore. She appeared full of men, and evidently piratical. Muskets were fired to bring her to. She returned a smart fire of round shot, grape and musketry, and still worked hard to escape. She was soon run on shore, and the crew, with the exception of one man, escaped. Two were found killed, and others must have been severely wounded, as the captain afterward appeared at Matanzas, and acknowledged that all his crew, but three, were killed. Pursuit by land could not be made, so the party were contented with getting the vessel off, and carrying her in as a prize. She proved to be the schooner *Pilot*, of Norfolk, a very fast sailer, and a craft that the pirates had long wished to possess. They had captured her but eight days before. She was armed with a long twelve-pounder, and an abundance of blunderbusses and other small-arms. It is surprising that none in the assailing party were injured by her fire. Her commander was a notorious buccaneer, named Domingo, who, notwithstanding his course of life, was possessed of some sentiments of honor; for there were letters for Com. Porter and his officers on board the *Pilot* when Domingo took her, and he politely forwarded them, with the message, that he did not wish to deprive them of the opportunity of hearing from their friends; that he had no ill will against them; that they were only engaged in doing their duty.

During the same cruise Capt. Cassin entered a harbor noted for pirates, where he discovered a felucca standing out. She was chased; when her crew ran her ashore, and took to the land. Pursuit was made for a short distance, but the enemy knew the ground and escaped. The felucca was a new, well coppered boat, pulling sixteen sweeps, and evidently just starting on her first cruise. Capt. Cassin also broke up several different establishments where the pirates were harbored; and the latter burnt three of their own schooners on his approach.

Lieut. Newell, commanding the *Ferret*, discovered a large armed barge in a bay not far from Matanzas. He sent an officer with five men, all that his boat would hold, to reconnoitre. Seven boats were seen on the shore. The pirates fired upon the boat with muskets, and a shot taking effect near the water edge, the officer was obliged to retreat. The schooner then stood in shore as close as possible, and commenced firing, endeavoring to destroy the boats, for the pirates were out of harm's way behind the rocks. As she could fire only when in the act of staying, and it was blowing hard, she hauled off and went to Matanzas for a suitable boat. The next day Lieut. Newell fell in with an English brig, from which he obtained a boat; but on returning to the bay, the pirates were found to have decamped. On landing, two boats were found; the rest had been removed up a lagoon extending some miles into the country. Being unprovided with proper boats, Lieut. Newell could not follow.

In July, one of the most desperate contests and brilliant victories of the expedition, took place on the coast of Cuba. In June, several piracies were reported, as having occurred on the south side of the island. Lieut. Watson, commanding the *Gallinipper*, was ordered to sail roud

the entire island, giving its shores a close examination. He was accompanied by the *Mosquito*, commanded by Lieut. Inman. These barges carried, in all, twenty-six men and five officers. While cruising in Si-quapa bay, near the very spot where the gallant Allen was killed, a large top-sail schooner, with a launch in company, was seen working up to an anchorage, where several merchantmen were lying. The appearance of these vessels was so suspicious, that Lieut. Watson bore up in order to discover their character. The schooner was seen to be well armed, and her deck filled with men. Lieut. Watson, therefore, showed his colors. On this the chase ran up the Spanish flag, brailled up her foresail, and commenced firing into the *Gallinipper*. Lieut. Watson kept away, and ran down upon her weather quarter, in order to board; the *Mosquito* attempting to close at the same time. But the pirates, wishing to avoid a close action, and having vessels of good sailing qualities, set all sail, and went off before the wind, compelling the barges to enter upon a long chase. At length, having run quite in shore, they anchored with springs to their cables, and seemed determined to make an obstinate resistance. As the barges now stood down for them, the pirates fired one of their heavy guns; but, though within close range, no injury was done. They then opened with small-arms, which the barges returned. After a few volleys the order was given to board, and was obeyed with a loud cheer, and the watchword "Huzza for Allen." The pirates did not wait for this hand-to-hand fight, but jumped overboard, and sought to escape by swimming to the shore. The *Mosquito* now sailed by the schooner, and passed through those that were swimming in the water, shooting many of them as she went by. The *Gallinipper* also pushed on to cut off their retreat. Some reached the launch, which still kept up her fire. But a volley of musketry soon drove her crew out of her. The men from the barges landed, and, in connection with the local authorities, killed, wounded, or took prisoners, all who reached the shore. Many were killed in the water. So that the almost total destruction of the crews, of both the schooner and the launch, was effected; amounting, on the best information that could be gained, to some seventy or eighty men.

What is certainly remarkable, not a person on our part was even wounded. When we consider the great disparity in the number of men, the superiority in the vessel, and all the advantages which existed on the part of the pirates, this must be set down as a very brilliant naval exploit.

The schooner was called the *Catalina*, mounting one long nine-pounder and three sixes. She was commanded by a celebrated pirate named *Diabolito*, or *Little Devil*, who was killed in the action. Her career had been short, having been captured from the Spaniards just before, and this being her first piratical cruise. The launch, also captured, was about equal to one of the barges. The pirates taken prisoners by the local authorities, were sent to Matanzas; and five surviving ones, in the hands of Lieut. Watson, were taken to Havana and delivered up, to be punished under Spanish law.

In the same month, Lieut. Kearney, commanding the *Greyhound*, and Lieut. Newton, commanding the *Beagle*, landed with a force at Cape Cruz, and after a pretty sharp encounter, broke up an establishment of

the pirates, burning several houses, and capturing some ordnance, which was mounted on shore.

In the month of August, a malignant fever broke out, and spread greatly among the vessels at Thompson's Island. Its prevalence became alarming. Many died, and Commodore Porter and many of his officers were prostrated by it. It was a very natural result of their exposures and poor accommodations. When information of it reached Washington, Com. Rodgers was directed to proceed without delay to the island, taking with him a board of competent surgeons, in order that it might be determined, whether from any cause the island itself was unhealthy. In case of a fatal issue of Commodore Porter's attack, Com. Rodgers was to assume the command. In the mean time, however, Com. Porter had determined, for the safety of his men, to come to the northward, and brought most of his squadron home shortly after Commodore Rodgers had sailed for the island. After remaining a sufficient time to obtain the desired benefit of a change of air, he returned with his vessels to his station.

During the following year, 1824, piracies were carried on to some extent — committed mainly in small boats, which were concealed in shore, and made short and rapid excursions, as opportunities occurred. In the early part of the day, merchant ships were very liable to be becalmed, when near the coast of Cuba. Pirates in these boats could at such times issue out, and easily attack them, there being no chance of escape by the use of their sails. The absence of the squadron, during the latter part of the previous year, had tended somewhat to revive the spirit of these ruffian adventurers. It became quite apparent also that these desperadoes were organized into a secret association, which, in the case of Cuba, extended entirely round the island, and with which Spanish merchants of respectable standing had connections of so intimate a character, as to make them accessories to all these inhuman crimes. Nor were some agents of the custom service, and other officials of the governments of the islands, too upright and pure to make their share of profit out of this system of plunder. And it certainly wore an air of suspicion, that the Spanish authorities, when too feeble themselves to destroy the pirates on land, would not accord, to the American forces, the privilege of pursuit into their territories. A continued grievance also existed in the fact, that the actual outrages of piracy were constantly committed by vessels, bearing commissions as privateers from the Spanish authorities of Porto Rico. The little American squadron, therefore, had all these difficulties to contend against, superadded to the physical hardships of the service. The actual force of this squadron should also be borne in mind, for that portion specially directed to this one object did not much exceed in guns and men, the force of a first class frigate.

Some few captures were made during this year. Lieut. Commandant Skinner, of the *Porpoise*, captured a schooner, the crew of which escaped to the shore. Lieut. Comd't Paine, of the *Terrier*, recaptured a French ship from the pirates, and chased the latter, but they jumped from their boat and swam to the shore.

In the latter part of October, Lieut. Platt, commanding the *Beagle*, was informed of the robbery of an American mercantile house in St.

Thomas. There was satisfactory evidence that the goods had been carried by the pirates into a small port on the east end of Porto Rico, called Foxardo. There had long been a good understanding with the pirates on the part of the inhabitants, if not of the local government of this town. Lieut. Platt readily agreed to afford his aid in recovering the property. He set sail immediately, and anchored in the harbor of Foxardo. He then waited upon the proper civil officers, who treated him roughly, demanded his commission, which, when sent for, they pronounced a forgery; charged him with being a pirate, and finally arrested him, and Lieut. Ritchie, who was with him, and detained them under guard during the day. After various insults on the part of the officials and the inhabitants, they were permitted to return to their vessel. As the Beagle was running off the coast, she met the John Adams standing in. Lieut. Platt went on board, and reported the treatment he had received, to Com. Porter. The decision of the latter was soon formed: he deemed this an insult to the flag of his country, which must be atoned for. The John Adams, drawing too much water to enter the bay, was ordered to a safe anchorage. The Commodore then took the Beagle and Grampus, with the boats of the John Adams, containing a part of her crew and officers under Captain Dallas, her commander, and proceeded toward Foxardo. He addressed a letter, dated November 12th, to the alcalde of the place, reciting the facts of the injury, demanding explanation and atonement, and threatening in case of refusal to make the town responsible. He gave one hour for a decision. This letter, on landing, was sent by a lieutenant with a flag of truce. Previous to this, as the vessels were coming to anchor, it was perceived that preparations were making in a shore battery to fire upon them. A boat was immediately sent with a detachment of seamen and marines, who took the battery and spiked the guns, the Spaniards fleeing without an attempt at defence. Commodore Porter now landed with two hundred men, who were formed in marching order, and moved toward the town. A battery of two guns, which raked the road in a very commanding position, was also deserted, and the guns were spiked by our men. In half an hour the town was reached, and was found prepared to make a defence. The party halted to await the return of the white flag. The authorities concluded to endure the humiliation of an explanation, rather than the evils of a contest. The alcalde and the captain of the port appeared, and in the most humble manner apologized to Lieut. Platt personally. They expressed great penitence for the wrong they had done, and promised thereafter to respect most carefully the rights of American officers. This apology was accepted, and after marching through the town the party returned to their vessels.

Com. Porter's dispatch, giving an account of this affair, produced an immediate order, dated 27th December, for his return home. The government deemed that he had overstepped the limits of his powers, and so also did the court-martial which was appointed for his trial. He offered a defence based on three grounds — the law of nations, American precedents, and the orders of the department. He was, however, sentenced to be suspended from the service for six months; and the President approved the sentence. This result so deeply affected the feelings of Com. Porter,

that he resigned, and entered into the Mexican service, where he received the appointment of commander-in-chief of the naval forces, with a salary of twenty-five thousand dollars a year.*

Captain Lewis Warrington was appointed to succeed Com. Porter in his command. The vessels employed in the West Indies during the year 1825, were the *Constellation*, *John Adams*, *Hornet*, *Spark*, *Grampus*, *Shark*, *Fox*, the *Steam Galliot Sea Gull*, the store-ship *Decoy* and the barges.

The schooner *Ferret* was upset in a squall, on the 4th of February, 1825, off the coast of Cuba, and five of her crew were lost. The vessel sunk soon after the survivors were rescued by the *Sea Gull* and the *Jackall*.

The same system of marine police, which had been established by Com. Porter, was still maintained by his successor, the vessels being constantly occupied in watching the coasts, and affording convoy to merchantmen. As it became now a settled purpose with our government to maintain an efficient force in these seas so long as the danger existed, the depredations and cruelties of the pirates gradually diminished, as they doubtless found that their business was growing more hazardous and less profitable. Consequently, but few captures were reported during this year.

In the month of March, a piratical sloop appearing in the neighborhood of the island of St. Thomas, Lieut. Sloat, commanding the *Grampus*, cruising in that quarter, fitted out a trading sloop with two lieutenants and twenty-three men, and dispatched her in pursuit. The pirate, unsuspecting of the character of the sloop, came alongside, and at half musket shot commenced firing. Having thus drawn the other into the snare, the sloop now opened a warm and unexpected fire. The action continued about forty-five minutes, when the pirates as usual ran their vessel on shore, and took to the land. Two of them were killed, and ten were taken prisoners, after landing, by Spanish soldiers. It was a subject of special satisfaction that among the prisoners was a celebrated chief Colfrecinas, who had for years been the terror of the vicinity. They were all executed by the government of Porto Rico.

In the month of March, Lieut. McKeever, commanding the *Sea Gull*, accompanied by the barge *Gallinipper*, started on a cruise. Falling in with the English frigate *Dartmouth*, and two English armed schooners, he entered into an arrangement for coöperation with the boats of the frigate, on condition that he should command the party. On the afternoon of the 25th, in approaching a key, which they suspected of being a rendezvous of pirates, they discovered the masts of a vessel concealed in the bushes. When hailed she hoisted Spanish colors, and ordered the boats to keep off, at the same time training her guns upon them, and making some ineffectual attempts to fire. Part of the force was now

* He remained in the service of Mexico until 1829, when he returned to his native country, and was appointed by President Jackson consul-general to Algiers. This post he occupied till the French conquest of Algiers, when he was transferred to Constantinople in the capacity of *Chargé d'affaires*. He afterward came to this country on a visit, and returned accredited to the Porte as a full minister. He proved a very capable and worthy representative of his country, and rendered her valuable services in the negotiation of important treaties with the Sultan. His health, however, gradually failed, and he died at Pera, a suburb of Constantinople, on the 28th of March, 1843, at the age of sixty-three. His body was brought home and interred in the grounds of the Naval Asylum near Philadelphia.

landed, while one boat kept on, to board. The commander was ordered to come on shore, which he did after much hesitation, but then attempted to run away. The cutter, in the mean time, boarding, and resistance being made, a general firing ensued both on board and on shore. The pirates were finally subdued, with a loss on their part of eight killed and nineteen taken prisoners. Several escaped by taking to the bushes. The schooner mounted two sixes on pivots, and four large swivels, besides arms for thirty-five men. She pretended to carry Spanish papers, but they were evidently false. Cases of American goods were also found, not only in the vessel, but also concealed in the bushes on shore. The next day they chased a schooner-rigged boat, which was deserted by the crew when they found they could not escape.

Com. Warrington, in discharging the duties of this command, gained a well-deserved reputation as a vigilant, active and zealous officer. Moreover he was fully successful in accomplishing the object so long desired, the freedom of the seas from the dangerous presence of these lawless and inhuman rovers. In his message of December, 1826, the President was able to report to Congress, that piratical practices had been totally suppressed. At the same time the secretary of the navy says in his report: "The view of our interests in the West Indies, so far as they are connected with the services of the navy, is more gratifying than at any time during the last four years."

It was of course still necessary, during several years, to keep a squadron in these waters, until the permanent conviction that the United States were determined to protect their commerce effectually, was so thoroughly impressed upon this unprincipled and reckless class of men, that they abandoned all hope of a revival of their outlawed trade. In late years this region has become entirely freed from this source of annoyance and danger, and its maritime interests have been under the supervision of the home squadron.

CHAPTER III.

Potomac under Com. Downes ordered to the East Indies—Attack of Malays on the crew of the ship *Friendship*—Potomac arrives at Quallah Battoo—Landing of the forces and attack upon the town under Lieut. Shubrick—Sharp encounters at the several forts—Malays defeated and punished—Death of Com. Bainbridge—Deaths of several of the older Commodores.

The frigate *Potomac* 44, was selected, in 1831, to be the flag-ship of the Pacific squadron, and was placed under the command of Commodore John Downes. It was originally intended that she should convey the Hon. Martin Van Buren, lately appointed minister to the court of St. James, to England, and then proceed by way of Cape Horn to her station. But intelligence of events in the East Indies, received at this time, altered the plan, and hastened her departure in a more direct course toward that part of the Pacific. The events which caused this change were these. The ship *Friendship*, Captain Endicott, of Salem, Mass., was lying, on the 7th of February, 1831, in the harbor of Quallah Battoo,

on the western coast of the island of Sumatra. Her officers and crew were engaged in taking on board a cargo of pepper. The pepper was purchased of the Malays, there being large plantations in the neighborhood devoted to its cultivation; it was weighed on shore, and then carried off to the ship in her own boats rowed by natives hired for the occasion. On the morning of the day mentioned, Captain Endicott, his second mate, and four seamen were on shore as usual, attending to or watching the part of the business transacted there. The depot was situated a short distance up a river which ran through the town and emptied into the harbor. One boat received its load and was rowed to the mouth of the river, where it stopped, and, as the captain supposed, received some more natives on board; but in reality the crew was changed, a body of armed men, double the number of the former crew, taking their place. This attracted the notice, but did not awaken the fears of the party on shore, and two of them were directed to watch. The boat proceeded alongside the ship, and commenced unloading. As more were in the boat than were necessary for this purpose, the larger part went on board the ship. The mate ordered them back, but they lingered, and as he was attending to the reception of the pepper, they suddenly approached him from behind, stabbed him in the back and soon dispatched him. They also killed two seamen and wounded three others. Four seamen jumped overboard and succeeded in reaching the shore, though they swam two miles before they could safely land, as the Malays lined the beach. The ship was now in the possession of the treacherous and murderous assailants, and many more began to push off in boats to join them.

In the mean time, the party on shore perceived that there was trouble on board the vessel, and were able to step into their other boat and push out into the river, just in time to save their lives from an assault of the natives, who were exulting with delight, as they saw the signals of capture flying on board the ship. As they shoved off, Po Adam, a Malay Rajah, who was peculiarly favorable to the Americans, sprang into the boat and went with them. The captain said, "What, you come too, Adam?" "Yes," he replied; "if they kill you, they must kill me first, captain." They were intercepted by a boat at the mouth of the river, but the mate, brandishing the cutlass of Po Adam, the only weapon indeed they had, kept the enemy at bay, so that they passed out uninjured.

Seeing such numbers of Malays on board, Captain Endicott concluded that any attempt to retake the ship would be but destruction to themselves, and therefore steered for Muckie, a place twenty miles to the south, to obtain assistance. After a hard row they reached this place in the night, and found there one ship and two brigs, all American, the captains of which resolved to undertake the recapture of the *Friendship*. They proceeded to Quallah Battoo, and sent a demand to the principal Rajah for the restoration of the vessel. He refused to give her up, and tauntingly sent them word to take her "if they could." The Malays, in their attempts to get her to the shore, had run her upon a reef. The three vessels ranged as near as possible, and opened a fire upon her. This was returned both from the ship, and from the forts on shore. Finding the fire was ineffective, the Americans now manned their boats, and pulled toward the ship, with the intention of boarding. This the Malays did not care to

wait for, but threw themselves into the water and made for shore. Captain Endicott was again master of his ship, but she had been completely rifled of all valuables. Twelve thousand dollars in specie was stolen, and other property to a large amount, and as the voyage was abandoned, the entire loss to the owners was some forty thousand dollars.

This account plainly discloses distinct evidences of a concealed plan on the part of the Rajahs and people to become possessed of this ship. These evidences need not be recapitulated.

When the *Friendship* arrived home, her owners laid a statement of these facts before the government, and in view of the interests of commerce, it was deemed exceedingly important that a vessel of war should show itself in these seas, and obtain redress for this special and aggravated wrong. Commodore Downes was instructed to this effect.

The *Potomac* sailed from New York on the 21st of August, 1831, having a complement, of all ranks, of five hundred men. She touched at the Cape of Good Hope, in search of information. No very certain or extensive knowledge could be obtained respecting the place or people, to whom this first visit of an American national ship was to be made. Not even a full and reliable chart of the coast could be obtained. The place, named Quallah Battoo, is situated, as has been already stated, on the western shore of the island of Sumatra. It lies entirely open to the sea. The navigation in the vicinity is exceedingly difficult and dangerous; reefs and shoals lining the shore. The town, including the neighboring pepper plantations, and thus embracing those who may be regarded as under one government, may have had a population of four thousand souls. It is almost perfectly concealed in a thick growth of timber and jungle. Several small forts, mounted with three or four guns each, constitute its defences; which, indeed, are quite effectual against the attacks of neighboring tribes.

The Quallah Battotoans form an independent community, owing no particular allegiance to any power. They pay some tribute to the King of Acheen, but he does not hold himself responsible for any of their acts. They are divided into various clans, at the head of each of which is a Rajah or chief. They are a treacherous race, acknowledging none of the laws that govern civilized nations, and in fact cannot be considered, in the light of justice and morality, as any better than pirates. They are of a warlike disposition, and in respect to courage and military skill, are by no means to be despised.

On the 5th of February, 1832, the *Potomac* arrived on the coast of Sumatra. Commodore Downes disguised the frigate as a merchantman, and then stood in and anchored about three miles from the town. Several officers, dressed as citizens and sailors, rowed toward the shore in a small boat, with the intention of landing, and gaining some idea of the localities. But the Malays evidently had their suspicions aroused, and manifested such signs of hostility, that it was not deemed prudent to attempt to land. Com. Downes being convinced that any mere verbal demand for satisfaction would be entirely useless, and only give time for the Malays to prepare better for their defence, determined to make an attack as soon as possible, in hopes of taking them by surprise, and securing the persons of some of the Rajahs; holding whom as hostages, he might gain higher

terms of satisfaction. Preparations to land the same night were therefore made. Two hundred and fifty seamen and marines were detailed for the duty, with proper division officers, and the whole placed under the command of Irvine Shubrick, the first lieutenant of the ship. Mr. Barry, who was the second mate of the *Friendship* at the time of the massacre, had come out as master's mate in the *Potomac*, in order that he might render service as a guide. He had a general knowledge of the position of the forts, and rendered invaluable aid in directing the attacking parties.

At a sufficient time before daylight to be unobserved, the boats were hoisted out, and the men stowed away in them; when they quietly and swiftly pulled toward shore. They went in through a heavy surf, but were all safely landed, and in fifteen minutes were formed in their line of march. Lieut. Edson led the van with the marines. The first division of the seamen was commanded by Lieut. Pinkham, the second by Lieut. Hoff, and the third by Lieut. Ingersoll. A six-pounder followed under the charge of sailing-master Totten. The boats were directed to keep company just outside the surf.

When the day dawned, the march commenced along the beach. The Malays were anticipating an attack, for their scouts were seen. Lieut. Hoff was ordered to surround the first fort, which was the most northern one. He left the main body with his division, and soon came to the outworks, consisting of a strong stockade of timber. Within this there was still a citadel, armed with small cannon. No time was afforded for parley and conciliation, for, as soon as the division approached, the Malays commenced the action by a sharp fire from all arms. They fought with great bravery and steadiness, and were found to be no mean adversaries. Lieut. Hoff succeeded in breaking through the gateway of the stockade, but the Malays still stood the attack for two hours, within their citadel. Finding it impossible to dislodge them by a distant fire, preparations were made to take the citadel by storm. It was necessary to tear up some of the palisades and to form a bridge of them, over which the eager seamen rushed, carrying the work which had so long held them in check, by an assault, which the Malays could not withstand. They fled, leaving twelve dead, but carrying their wounded with them.

Lieut. Edson, with his marines, attacked the next fort situated in the rear of the town. The Malays behaved with the same spirit here. But they could not face the marines, as with steady discipline they stormed the fort, and forced their way into it. The contest was not continued so long here as at the first fort.

Mr. Barry was unable to find the other fort in the rear of the town, so thoroughly was it concealed in the trees; so that Lieut. Pinkham, who had been sent against it with the first division, led his men through the town, and rejoined Lieut. Shubrick. The latter had already commenced his attack, with the third division under Lieut. Ingersoll, aided by the six-pounder, upon the principal fort, situated at the southern point of the town, and quite near the beach. Here the fight was long and gallantly maintained on both sides. The six-pounder was brought up, and being managed with admirable precision and skill by Mr. Totten, did great execution. The gate of the outer defences was soon forced, and the men

rushed in without reluctance, anxious to come to closer quarters with their foes. But the severest part of their work yet remained to be done. The stronghold, consisting of an elevated platform mounted with several cannon, still held out, and our men had to stand the fire from it without protection. The ladder to the platform had of course been removed, and in the attempt to climb up to it one of the seamen was killed and several were wounded. At this critical moment Lieutenants Hoff and Edson, having secured their victories, came up with detachments from their divisions, and took a position between the fort and the water, from which they poured in a very effective cross fire. The men in the boats were also near enough to make their fire felt in the contest. The battle now raged against the devoted Malays with exterminating severity. Although thus closely invested, and numbers falling under so well conducted a fire, they yet fought with desperation; and it was not till almost all were killed, that their position could be carried. Their guns were then spiked and dismounted.

There was still another large fort upon the opposite side of the river. It had kept up an annoying fire upon our troops from a twelve-pounder, during the attack upon the last fort. But it was found impracticable to ford the river, and it was not prudent to bring the boats around into it, so that an attack upon this one was relinquished.

The town was now fired and much of it was reduced to ashes. The fort which Lieut. Pinkham's division was unable to find, now revealed its position by opening its fire. A detachment was ordered to capture it. The Malays as usual fought fiercely. But success had animated the Americans with even unwonted zeal and impetuosity, and after a short conflict they carried this work by assault. The Malays suffered greatly at this point also. Those able to flee escaped through secret passages in the jungle, into which it was worse than useless to follow them.

The action had now continued about two hours and a half, and with success on our part at every point attacked. The surf began to increase so much as to render it unsafe for the boats to remain longer near the shore. Large numbers of Malays also began to collect in the rear of the town, and the officer in command wisely judged that further injury even to the enemy could not be necessary after the severe retaliatory measures just inflicted. The order was therefore given to re-embark, and soon the victorious troops were again on board of the frigate. This success was purchased at some cost to our own brave men, though it was comparatively small. Two men were killed; two officers and nine men were wounded. The loss of the enemy must have been very severe; for it was known that at least one hundred and fifty were killed. Among those killed was the Rajah who was principally concerned in the capture and plunder of the *Friendship*. Com. Downes in his report of the affair, remarks: "Lieut. Shubrick has my warmest acknowledgement for the able and gallant manner in which he conducted the expedition." In his report to Commodore Downes, Lieut. Shubrick says: "The lieutenants, commanding the different divisions, have reported to me the entire satisfaction they derived from the coolness and bravery of the officers and men under their particular commands."

The next morning the *Potomac* stood in, and anchored within a mile

of the town, bringing her broadside to bear upon it. The Malays thought, or pretended to think, that the Americans had no ships of war, or "ships with big guns," inasmuch as none had ever appeared off their coast. Commodore Downes thought it would be an impressive lesson for them to learn, from their own observation, the power of heavy guns. He consequently opened a fire with thirty-two pound shot upon the fort on the other side of the river, which had been so troublesome the day before. As the shot began to plough their way through the wooden structure, the Malays, abundantly convinced, fled from its slender protection. After cutting up the fort very severely, seeing white flags raised in various places, the Commodore ordered hostilities to cease. A white flag shortly came off to the ship, accompanied by several of the inhabitants, who expressed the greatest penitence for their misdeeds, sued most humbly for peace, and begged especially that no more "big guns" should be fired.

Com. Downes, through an interpreter, addressed them respecting their conduct in the case of the *Friendship*, set forth its enormity, cautioned them as to their future treatment of Americans, and threatened them with the power of his country should they again manifest similar treachery and barbarity. The Potomac then proceeded by the way of China to her station in the Pacific. After a full account, and a particular explanation of the causes which induced him to retaliate by force without any previous demand for satisfaction upon the Rajahs of Quallah Battoo, the course of Com. Downes met the approval of the government.

In 1833, the navy was called upon to mourn the death of one of its long distinguished captains; one of that number whose personal fame appears identified with the fame of the service itself. On the 28th of July in this year, Com. William Bainbridge expired in the city of Philadelphia, in the sixtieth year of his age. He entered the navy in 1798, his commission as a lieutenant being offered him by the secretary without any solicitation on his part. His career has been traced in the preceding history up to the time of his return from the Mediterranean in 1815. For several years after this he remained in command of the Boston station, being permitted also to retain on board of his favorite ship, the *Independence*, a full complement of officers and about two-thirds of a crew. In November, 1819, he was ordered to the new line-of-battle ship *Columbus*, and again sent out as the commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean squadron. He returned from this, his last cruise, in the summer of 1821. He was subsequently appointed to the command of the Philadelphia station, then to the Boston station, and then for three years was president of the Navy Board. He afterward returned to the Philadelphia station, but in 1832, was again placed in command at Boston, where, however, he remained but a short time, as the climate seriously affected his now declining health. He therefore returned to his family in Philadelphia, where he remained until his death. About two hours before he died, his mind began to wander, and he called for his sword and pistols, which not being attended to, he raised himself partially in bed, and demanded these instruments with great vehemence, and ordered that all hands should be called to board the enemy!

Though not in the order of time, we will here mention the dates of the

deaths of the older and more promigent captains, who have been so often mentioned in the main history.*

Com. John Shaw died in Philadelphia on the 17th of September, 1823, at the age of fifty. He returned from the command of the Mediterranean squadron in 1817, and afterward commanded at the Boston and Charleston stations.

Com. John Rodgers after the close of the war with Great Britain, served as president of the Board of Naval Commissioners for twenty-one years, with but an interval of two years, when he was in command of the Mediterranean squadron, in the *North Carolina* 74. He died at Philadelphia on the 1st of August, 1838, aged sixty-seven years.

Com. Isaac Hull was employed at various stations on shore and also on the Navy Board. He wore a broad pennant in the Pacific, and afterward in the Mediterranean on board the *Ohio* 74. His death occurred in Philadelphia, on the 13th of February, 1843, in his sixty-eighth year.

Com. Jacob Jones commanded in 1821 in the Mediterranean, and in 1826 in the Pacific. He was also a navy commissioner, and commanded at various navy-yards. He died at Philadelphia on the 3d of August, 1850, in the eighty-second year of his age, being at the time the governor of the Naval Asylum.

Com. Isaac Chauncey succeeded Bainbridge, in 1816, in the command of the Mediterranean squadron. He was never at sea again, but performed the usual shore service, and while president of the Navy Board, died on the 27th of January, 1840.

Com. Jesse D. Elliot was employed in quite constant sea-service after the close of the British war. He commanded the *Ontario* in Decatur's squadron in the war against Algiers, and was successively on the *Brazil* station, and in command of the West India and of the Mediterranean squadrons. On charges in connection with this last command, he was sentenced to a suspension of four years, but was restored before the expiration of the time. He died in command of the Philadelphia navy-yard, on the 10th of December, 1845, aged fifty-six years.

Com. Melancthon T. Woolsey, who performed such good service on the lakes, hoisted a broad pennant on the *Brazil* station, toward the close of his life, and died soon after his return, in 1838, he being about fifty-six years of age.

Com. Lewis Warrington was the successor of Com. Porter in the command of the naval force assembled in the West Indies for the suppression of piracy. He was for some time president of the Board of Navy Commissioners, and at the time of his death, was chief of the Bureau of Ordnance and Hydrography. He died at Washington on the 12th of October, 1851.

Com. Thomas M'Donough earned his laurels early. After his great battle on Lake Champlain, he was continued in active duty; but his career was not a long one. He died on the 10th of November, 1825, at sea, when about ten days from Gibraltar, being on his return from the command of the Mediterranean squadron. He was about forty-two years of age at the time of his death.

* Biographies of several of those whose decease is here mentioned, will be found in COOPER'S *LIVES OF NAVAL OFFICERS*, which includes Bainbridge, Shaw, Preble, Shubrick, Somers, Paul Jones, Woolsey, Perry, Dale, Barry, and a history of "Old Ironsides."

Com. James Biddle, it will be remembered, commanded a naval force against the pirates in 1822. He died on the first of October, 1848, at his residence in Philadelphia, not being in any command at the time, but having recently returned from the command of the East India squadron and on the Pacific station.

Com. James Barron never was sent to sea by the government after his unfortunate affair in the Chesapeake. His suspension lasted five years, and at different times he was in command at Philadelphia and Norfolk. When too infirm for active service, he retired to the latter place to reside, and died there in 1851, at the advanced age of eighty-three years. He held a commission as post-captain since 1709, and headed the list of captains at the time of his death.

CHAPTER IV.

United States Exploring Expedition—Lieut. Wilkes appointed to the command—Sails in August, 1838—Progress to Cape Horn—First Antarctic cruise—Loss of the *Sea Gull*—Progress to Sydney—Second Antarctic cruise—Perils and escapes—Peacock among the ice—Return to the northward—Extensive explorations among the South Sea islands—Attack upon Sualib—Murder of Lieut. Underwood and Midshipman Henry—Severe punishment of the natives—Arrival at the Sandwich Islands—Cruisings among various island groups—Arrival and surveys upon the north-west coast—Cruise of the *Peacock*—Her wreck at the Columbia river—Return of the vessels across the Pacific—Rendezvous at Singapore—Course homeward—Mutiny on board U. S. brig *Somers*.

The entire history of the people of the United States evinces their peculiar aptitude for maritime pursuits. The enterprise of no other nation, ancient or modern, has so rapidly given existence to so vast a commerce. During the state of colonial dependence, and in the very infancy of national independence, the genius of the nation took this direction so readily, as to give promise of some future unwonted development. That promise has been abundantly redeemed. Every sea has curled its foam, in token of subjection, under the conquering prow of the American merchantmen. Yet the nation had lived a half century in the power and prosperity of its separate existence, and had taken rank beyond dispute beside the first maritime power of the world, before the government made any attempts to investigate the many obscure points, and the many unknown portions of that great element of the earth, upon which was risked so large a proportion of the wealth of its subjects.

It was natural that even for so long a period, it should modestly leave these undertakings to such older nations as could command the leisure, the wealth, and the science necessary, while it could but encourage its seamen in the practical task of availing themselves of the labors of experienced and scientific navigators. Still it must certainly be perceived, that bare justice to so important a branch of national industry, as well as a noble spirit of emulation in the career of scientific discovery, would at some period demand that a government, representing so much mental vigor and physical greatness in the people, should perform some generous and efficient service in the cause of nautical exploration. Such considerations have prevailed, and such a demand has been responded to on the

part of the government. As the officers, seamen, and vessels of the navy were employed in this expedition, it comes properly within the scope and intention of this work, to give a succinct account of its course and its results.

Congress, by a law of the 18th of May, 1836, authorized the equipment and employment of a portion of the national marine, for the purpose of exploring those seas in which the whale-fisheries, as well as other branches of commercial enterprise, were pursued. The appropriations of money were liberal, and the expenditures for the numerous items of outfit, necessary for so unusual a voyage, were made on the most lavish scale. But for various reasons, which need not here be set forth or discussed, the organization and departure of the expedition were delayed from month to month, until, indeed, years began to settle upon the abortive plan, and the very mention of its ambitious title would provoke ridicule. Different officers, appointed to the command, successively resigned, and finally all but one of the vessels of the number originally selected were changed. This state of things continued until the spring of 1838. On the 20th of March, 1838, Charles Wilkes, lieutenant in the navy, was directed to assume the command of the expedition.

The instructions issued to him by the Navy Department, dated the 11th of August, 1838, indicated the following objects to be aimed at: "To explore and survey the Southern Ocean, having in view the important interest of our commerce embarked in the whale-fisheries, as well as to determine the existence of all doubtful islands and shoals; and to discover and accurately fix the position of those which lie in or near the track pursued by our merchant vessels in that quarter, and which may have hitherto escaped the observation of scientific navigators."

"Although the primary object of the expedition is the promotion of the great interests of commerce and navigation, yet all occasions will be taken, not incompatible with the great purpose of the undertaking, to extend the bounds of science, and to promote the acquisition of knowledge. For the more successful attainments of these objects, a corps of scientific gentlemen, for the departments of philology, zoölogy, conchology, geology, mineralogy and botany, with artists and a horticulturist, will accompany the expedition, and are placed under your direction. The hydrography and geography of the various seas and countries you may visit in the route pointed out to you, will occupy your special attention; and all the researches connected with them, as well as with astronomy, terrestrial magnetism, and meteorology, are confided exclusively to the officers of the navy, on whose zeal and talents the department confidently relies for such results as will enable future navigators to pass over the track traversed by your vessels, without fear and without danger."

The track marked out in the instructions required a circumnavigation of the globe, with a divergence quite toward the southern pole, and so far toward the north as the western possessions of the United States extended, with frequent crossings of the Pacific Ocean and extensive cruising among its countless islands. This course it will be seen was very fully and faithfully pursued through a space of three years and ten months.

The vessels composing the squadron were, the sloop of war *Vincennes*,

Lieutenant Wilkes, commanding the expedition; the sloop of war Peacock, William L. Hudson, Lieutenant commanding; the brig of war Porpoise, Cadwalader Ringgold, Lieutenant commanding; store-ship Relief, A. K. Long, Lieutenant commanding; tenders Sea Gull and Flying Fish, commanded by Passed-midshipmen Reid and Knox. The tenders were originally New York pilot boats, purchased and altered for this service. The officers throughout were volunteers.

The larger portion of the summer was consumed in the necessary preparations, and even then the outfit was by no means complete. On the 8th of August, 1838, the vessels dropped down to Hampton Roads, and on the 19th of the same month they put to sea.

In the body of this work many instances are cited to enforce the nautical principle of the necessity of an approximate equality in the sailing capacity of the several vessels of a squadron amid actual hostilities; as the most unprofessional must perceive that the fastest sailing vessels must, for concert of action, conform their progress to the attainments of the dullest sailer. This expedition, which, from the nature of its objects, required a precision and an attainable harmony in the movement of all its members upon a given point, was embarrassed by a violation of the same valuable principle.

The store-ship Relief was soon found to be a dull sailer, and incapable of acting with the rest of the squadron; she was therefore ordered to proceed alone to Rio Janeiro. Subsequently she proved so much of a hindrance, that from Callao she was dispatched home, leaving her supplies at the Sandwich Islands and Sidney, and so no longer formed a part of the expedition.

The squadron first sailed for Madeira, stopping there a week; then it took a southerly course, touched at the Cape de Verde Islands, and arrived at Rio on the 24th of November. In passing over portions of the ocean where shoals or reefs were supposed to exist, the vessels sailed in open order, from three to five miles apart; thus giving the opportunity of examining carefully a space of about twenty miles in breadth, and affording means of fully determining many obscure points in hydrography. This course, pursued in all similar cases, gave many valuable results, and furnished reliable data for the science of navigation. After certain observations, surveys, and repairs, on the 6th of January, they left Rio; stopped at the Rio Negro, 41° south latitude, for the purpose of ascertaining the resources of the country, and the inducements it offered for trade; doubled Cape Horn on the 16th of February, and shortly after entered Orange Harbor, which had been appointed as the place of rendezvous.

From this point was made the first attempt at Antarctic discovery. For this purpose it was advisable not to proceed in squadron. The Vincennes was left anchored in Orange Harbor; her officers employed in making surveys and recording observations. Lieut. Com. Wilkes went on board the Porpoise, and taking the Sea Gull with him, proceeded toward the South. He penetrated as far in that direction as the season would permit. The weather becoming very unpropitious, the vessels being constantly exposed amid fogs and icebergs, and the equipments of the crew proving insufficient for such severe navigation, he was unable to

prosecute the work of discovery to any great extent. He coasted along Palmer's Land and observed its course, but could not reach a high southern latitude. Here they gained their first experience of the exciting grandeur presented in the severer forms of nature in the polar regions. Both vessels returned safely to Orange Harbor about the close of March.

The Peacock, accompanied by the Flying Fish, bore off in a south-westerly direction. They soon separated in a gale. They cruised, however, mainly in the same direction, their object being to attain if possible the *ne plus ultra* of Captain Cook, and to observe the changes which might have occurred in the appearance of the ice since his time. The Flying Fish did reach within sixty miles of the desired point, and it seemed at one time that she would penetrate beyond; but the fickle weather, and the ever shifting islands of ice soon disappointed that hope. At times the ice fields closed around her, as if decreeing her destruction, but bold and skillful seamanship accomplished her deliverance. The Peacock was often exposed to like dangers, and her escapes were alike wonderful. Finding the season too far advanced for useful or safe navigation, and the crews suffering severely from the unsuitable character of the vessels for such service, they both turned northward. On the 25th of March, to their mutual joy, they fell in with each other, and sailed together until the first of April, when the Peacock bore up for Valparaiso, and the tender made her way to Orange Harbor.

The Relief, in the mean time, taking on board the most of the scientific gentlemen, proceeded toward the Straits of Magellan, in order to gain information respecting the country. But having consumed much time on the passage, and having lost her anchors while endeavoring to ride out a severe and long gale at Noir Island, which accident came very near causing the wreck of the vessel on a reef toward which she drifted, it was concluded at a council of officers, to steer directly for Valparaiso.

Thus the object of her detachment was entirely frustrated. In the latter part of May the Vincennes, Peacock, Porpoise and Flying Fish were together in the harbor of Valparaiso. Here they waited in vain for the arrival of the Sea Gull. This valuable little schooner had sailed with her consort, the Flying Fish, from Orange Harbor. A severe gale came upon them the first night they were out, when they lost sight of each other. The latter vessel regained the Harbor, and rode out the gale safely. But no account has ever been received of her companion. It is probable she was lost in the gale. Passed-midshipmen J. W. E. Reid, and F. A. Bacon, with a crew of fifteen men, were lost by this disaster. These officers had won excellent characters in the service, and their untimely end could not but cause sadness among their companions in adventure and danger.

The squadron next stopped at Callao. Both in Chili and Peru, the officers and scientific corps were active in gaining valuable information in the various departments to which they were devoted. But our limits will allow us to give only an outline sketch of even the strictly maritime labors and results of the expedition.

In accordance with instructions, they now stretched in a due westerly course across the Pacific, leaving Callao on the 12th of July. They examined various island groups lying in their course, verified some doubtful points in hydrography, added largely to their scientific accumulations, and

arrived at Sidney, New South Wales, on the 28th of November. The commander speaks warmly of the courtesy with which they were received and entertained during their stay, by the English authorities and residents.

Preparations were now made for another and more extensive cruise in the polar seas. After all that could be done in the form of repairs, it was still apparent that the vessels were but imperfectly fitted for the trying ordeal before them. The Peacock, indeed, was in such a condition, that it was involving considerable risk to take her on so perilous a voyage. But the reputation of the expedition and the honor of the nation were deeply involved in the venture, and properly proved preponderating motives, for persistence through painful uncertainties.

It was wisely determined that the members of the scientific corps should pursue their researches through the wide field opened to them in New Holland and New Zealand, during the absence of the vessels.

On the 26th of December, the expedition once more turned toward the extreme south which forbids man's approach by the savage frown of nature and the gloomy reign of death, while enticing him by the chances of discovery and renown amid her unknown wonders. Considerations relating to the safety of the vessels, the saving of time, and the awakening of a more active and promising spirit of emulation, induced Lieutenant Com. Wilkes to direct each vessel to act independently of her consorts, when arrived in the region of the designed explorations. The Flying Fish consequently parted from the squadron on the 2d, and the Peacock on the 3d of January. The Vincennes and the Porpoise remained in company until the 12th. The day previous, they came in sight of the solid barrier of ice in latitude $64^{\circ} 11' S.$, longitude $164^{\circ} 53' E.$ The Peacock came up with the ice on the 15th, and the Flying Fish on the 21st, both more to the westward of the former vessels.

No doubt now remains of the existence of land within the Antarctic circle. The testimony of both French and English exploring expeditions confirms the fact, which it is claimed the American expedition first established as a part of geographical knowledge. This fact is determined by repeated and continuous observations made separately on board the Vincennes, the Peacock, and the Porpoise. And the discovery was made some days before the officers of the French expedition claim to have made the same. The American vessels coasted some sixty-five degrees of longitude along the impenetrable barrier of ice, observing throughout most of this distance, highlands evidently reaching thousands of feet in altitude, and covered with perpetual snow. They met also other decisive signs of contiguous land. All the evidence sustains the claim, that these elevated points of land are not portions of mere detached islands inclosed within a frozen sea, but are the visible parts of a vast Antarctic continent, the main extent undistinguishable from the resplendent snow fringe skirt-ing its ocean boundary. No human beings inhabit these regions, and the representatives of any animal tribes are very few.

It was not without great hardships and perilous exposures, that the expedition gained these honors of the discoverer. All the vessels suffered from severe and prolonged gales, heightened in their fearfulness, and armed with unusual elements of destruction, by the addition of vast and

innumerable icebergs, and masses of floe-ice. It must be observed also that the temperature was most of the time below the freezing point, and that mists, fogs, sleet and snow storms, were relieved by but occasional clear and sunny days.

The Flying Fish was soon compelled to return northward. Her crew was so reduced by sickness that they were unable to reef the foresail, and consequently the vessel was obliged to carry the whole sail during a gale of several days' duration, which caused her to labor heavily and to leak so much, that it was necessary to keep the pumps going constantly. The imperative demands of safety, constrained the officers to retrace their steps to a more genial climate.

The Peacock, however, ran the gauntlet of dangers in the most heroic and successful manner. Her commander, in order if possible to make more accurate determinations respecting the land seen in the distance, ran into a deep bay filled with a large number of icebergs. He obtained soundings in three hundred and twenty fathoms, thus clearly establishing the proximity of land. The dangers which now brought the ship to the very verge of destruction, can best be detailed in the language employed by Lieutenant Com. Hudson, in his report to the department. "While further pursuing the object of our search in this vicinity on the morning of the 24th, and endeavoring to clear some ice ahead of us, the ship made a sternboard, and came in contact with a large piece of ice, which carried away one of the wheel-ropes, wrenched the neck of the rudder, and rendered it useless.

"We immediately commenced working ship with the sails and ice-anchors into a more open sea." In this we were successful for a time, until an increase of wind and a change in its direction, brought in upon us masses of ice for miles in extent, which completely beset the ship, finished the work of destruction on our rudder, and forced us into the immediate vicinity of an ice-island some seven or eight miles in extent, with an elevation equaling our topgallant-masthead, and its upper portion inclining toward the ship. In this situation we furled all but the fore-and-aft sails, and hung by our ice anchors.

"Fortunately, between us and a portion of this island lay a large piece of ice, one end of which held us by the counter, until forced beyond it by the pressing masses of ice outside, which started our anchors and set us stern on to the island, carrying away our spanker-boom and stern-davits, and forcing the starboard quarter-deck bulwarks in end some three or four inches, jamming a signal-gun hard and fast in the gangway, and breaking off the bulwark stanchions on that side of the quarter-deck. We took this occasion to cant her with the jib, into a narrow channel alongside the island, and with the help of other sails, passed by a portion of it without further injury to our spars, until an opportunity presented of forcing her into a small opening in the ice, with the head toward the sea.

"Our rudder, which we unshipped and got in upon deck while wedged in the ice, came in over the side in two pieces, the head and neck entirely broken off, with the two midship pintles, and we shortly afterward found the upper and lower braces gone from the stern-post. Toward midnight the sea was increasing, accompanied with snow, with every

indication of a gale from seaward; and the ice, with which we were continually in contact, or actually jammed, more formidable in character, rapidly accumulating outside of us, and forming a compact mass. I found, as we were nearing the open sea, that we had been carried so far to leeward by the ice, as to be in great danger of taking up our last residence in the barrier, amongst bergs and islands of ice. There was therefore no chance left, but to force her out, or grind and thump the ship to pieces in the attempt.

"Aided by a kind Providence, we reached an open space on the morning of the 25th, after having beat off the gripe of the ship, &c.; and at meridian the carpenters had so far secured our rudder that it was again shipped, in the two remaining braces left on the stern-post. We were yet surrounded by ice and icebergs, in a bay some thirty miles in extent, from which no outlet could be seen from the mast-head. At midnight, however, we found a passage, about half a mile in width, between some bergs and field-ice."

Though having gained the open sea in safety, the ship was so damaged, as to require the commander, in the exercise of common prudence, to steer directly for Sidney. On examination for repairs, it was found that the action of the ice had ground the stem off to within an inch and a half of the wood ends of the planking; thus revealing the very narrow escape that had been effected.

The Vincennes, in the persevering efforts of her commander to reach and examine the land, also became repeatedly involved in the wide fields of floating ice. Gales were encountered in such situations, which drove the ship along the borders of the huge moving masses, with a velocity which would have caused instant destruction, had not the management been both skillful and fortunate. The Porpoise also encountered the same difficulties, which must ever characterize polar navigation, but was able successfully to carry out her instructions, and pushed on as far as longitude 100° E., and latitude $64^{\circ} 15'$ S., from which point she also commenced her return. During the cruise along this lonely coast, her commander reports a most surprising instance of national envy and jealousy. On the 30th of January two vessels were discovered, which proved to be French discovery ships under Captain D'Urville. Lient. Com. Ringgold says: "Desirous of speaking, and exchanging the usual and customary compliments incident to naval life, I closed with them, designing to pass within hail, under the flag-ship's stern. When within short musket-shot, my intentions too evident to excite a doubt, so far from a reciprocity being evinced, I saw, with surprise, sail made on board the flag-ship. Without a moment's delay, I hauled down my colors, and bore up on my course."

The Vincennes penetrated as far as longitude 97° E.; the weather then evincing that the short and doubtful reign of the Antarctic summer was over, she finally turned away from the cheerless coast.

The results of this cruise are certainly honorable to the skill, vigilance, enterprise, and prudence of the officers, and to the cheerful endurance and prompt obedience of the crews, of all the vessels. The reputation of the American navy was augmented by this, the first attempt in a new field of effort, in which a weighty responsibility was met by a vigorous

exercise of those moral qualities, which had been developed by previous more appropriate trials.

The squadron found constant occupation during the ensuing summer in surveying and exploring duties, amid the numerous islands of the Southern Archipelago. New Zealand, the Friendly Islands, and the Fejee Group were visited for these purposes. The extent of labor performed may be estimated when the commander states, that one hundred and fifty-four islands, and fifty detached reefs were surveyed, and besides this, numerous harbors were surveyed and sounded. Nor was there any want of effort and success in gaining useful information of all kinds relating to commerce, in enlarging the collections illustrating the various branches of natural science, and in obtaining full acquaintance with the character, the manners, the modes of life, and the moral condition of the inhabitants, thus making a valuable contribution to the science of Ethnology.

Though prosecuting a work of peace, and especially desirous of establishing permanent relations of amity with the barbarous tribes of the Pacific, in order to the greater security of commerce, still, during its stay in the Fejee Group, the expedition was under the necessity of twice putting in exercise its military power. In July a surveying party, under Lieutenant Perry in a launch and Mr. Knox in a first cutter, ran into Sualib bay for shelter during a storm. In endeavoring to beat out again the cutter ran on a reef at low tide, and it was found impossible to get her off. The natives in great numbers and well armed, soon collected near, and commenced a serious attack. The ammunition in the cutter being all wet, and the launch being unable to render any effective assistance in repelling the savages, the crew abandoned the boat, and went on board the launch. On the 12th the launch rejoined the Vincennes and Peacock. Immediately the schooner and eight boats from the ships, with an extra complement of men, under the immediate command of Lieutenants Wilkes and Hudson, proceeded to inflict merited punishment upon the natives. They entered the bay and cautiously marched to the principal village, meeting with no resistance, though the inhabitants of this island were unusually well supplied with fire-arms, and had the advantage of a good position, from which they might have inflicted considerable injury on the Americans. The town, consisting of about sixty slender huts, was burned, and the savages were taught a salutary lesson, without the loss of any lives. The cutter was recovered, but property in it, to the value of a thousand dollars, was stolen.

A tragical affair occurred during the latter part of July, at Malolo, an island of the same group. Lieut. Underwood with a party landed on this island, during a survey carried on in two of the boats of the squadron, under the command of Lieut. Alden, for the purpose of ascending a height to look for the Porpoise. He was soon recalled, in consequence of some suspicious movements among the natives, bringing with him a young native, who was retained as a hostage. The next morning the same officer landed for the purpose of procuring provisions. The natives for some reason manifested considerable reluctance to trading, and Lieut. Underwood and party remained some length of time on shore in unsuccessful attempts at negotiation. In the mean time Midshipman Henry

desired, and was allowed to join those on shore. The natives now began to collect in greater numbers, and evidently were not in a friendly mood.

The symptoms of an attack became so manifest, that Lieut. Underwood called his party together and ordered a retreat to the boat. At the same time the hostage suddenly jumped out of Lieut. Alden's boat and commenced running toward the shore. A midshipman fired over his head, but this did not stop his escape. The report of fire-arms was heard on shore, and it became evident to those in the boats that their companions were engaged in a serious conflict with an overpowering number of savages. They pushed for the land, and as soon as their fire-arms bore effectively, the savages disappeared in a hasty retreat. But the murderous deed had been consummated. On landing they found one seaman badly wounded, and Lieut. Underwood and Midshipman Henry lying prostrate near the beach. The officers in a few moments expired in the arms of their friends; and their bodies, rescued from the revolting horrors of cannibalism, were sadly borne off to the Flying Fish, which was a few miles distant. They were interred on one of the small sand islands in the vicinity, and all possible precautions adopted to save their graves from being violated by the savages.

This unprovoked massacre called for stern retribution; and the punishment was inflicted with certainly adequate severity. Lieutenant Com. Wilkes was himself at this time on board the Flying Fish, and the brig Porpoise was also now in company. There were two towns, Sualib and Arro, situated upon opposite sides of the island. The party which was to attack and destroy these, consisted of seventy officers and men, and was placed under the orders of Lieutenant Commandant Ringgold. The party in the boats, intended to cut off escape from the island and to co-operate with the former party, was led by Lieutenant Com. Wilkes.

The first party landed without opposition on the south-east point of the island, destroyed the plantations in their course, and crossing over the high land, came in sight of Sualib, situated on the southern shore. Here it was found that the natives were mostly assembled with the intention of defending themselves by all means possible to them; and their preparations and position were not to be despised, even by disciplined troops. They evidently expected some punishment for the bloody deed, and had retreated to their stronghold. The village was surrounded entirely by a strong stockade of cocoa-nut trees, placed a few feet apart, and filled between with exceedingly close and substantial wicker-work. On the outside of this was a wide ditch, filled with water; and on the inside a dry ditch, in which the defenders were quite safely intrenched, while they shot through the loopholes in the palisade. The savages were very confident in the impregnability of their fortress, for they received the advancing Americans with shouts and expressions of defiance. They possessed quite a number of muskets, as well as their ordinary weapons. Almost the entire population were within the inclosure, and the women and children were as defiant and active in defence as the men. Knowing that an assault must be attended with some loss, even though conducted against undisciplined troops, the commander wisely attacked from such a distance as his means would permit. A sharp contest of about fifteen minutes was maintained, during which a chief and six of the savages

were killed, and the houses within were fired by a rocket. The natives, convinced of the superiority of their assailants, and terrified at a conflagration among their bamboo huts, which they could not extinguish, began to escape through a gate, leading toward the sea, in the utmost consternation and confusion. They were allowed to retreat without further attack. A few of the Americans were wounded, but only one severely. The town was entirely consumed.

The party now marched northward across the island to coöperate with the boat party against Arro. The latter reached Arro first, and without resistance set fire to and destroyed it. While these operations were going on, Lieutenant Emmons chased five canoes, containing about forty native warriors. When overtaken they offered fight and made a resolute resistance. But four of them were finally captured, the other escaping. The next day the whole force from the vessels assembled on a hill, and received a large part of the population of the island, who came to sue for pardon in the most beseeching and abject manner, thus acknowledging, according to their own form and custom, that they were conquered, and were justly punished for their murder of the officers.

On this part of his conduct, Lieutenant Com. Wilkes, in his narrative, makes the following remarks, which are entitled to careful and candid consideration: "The punishment inflicted on the natives was no doubt severe: but I cannot view it as unmerited, and the extent to which it was carried was neither dictated by cruelty nor revenge. I thought that they had been long enough allowed to kill and eat with impunity, every defenceless white that fell into their hands, either by accident or misfortune, and that it was quite time, as their intercourse with our countrymen on their adventurous voyages was becoming more frequent, to make the latter more secure. I desired to teach the savages that it was not weakness or fear that had thus far stayed our hands; I was aware, too, that they had ridiculed and misunderstood the lenity, with which they had heretofore been treated by both the French and English men-of-war."

On the 11th of August, the expedition left the Fejee Islands, on its way to the Sandwich Islands, where it now became necessary to seek the supplies, which had been left by the store-ship *Relief*, the crew having been already on short allowance for some time. The vessels pursued separate courses, in order that more islands might be examined on the way, and the existence of some doubtful ones be determined. In October the vessels were again reunited at Honolulu, island of Oahu. As the time for which the crews had enlisted was nearly expired, and the expedition in order to accomplish all its objects must be absent from home longer than was originally intended, it became necessary to enter into new arrangements with the men. The most of them re-entered the service, and the places of the few who preferred returning home, were supplied by natives, under the sanction of the governor.

The year now drawing to its close, it was deemed useless to undertake the exploration of the north-west coast of America, which was a part of the service ordered, until the ensuing spring. We therefore find the vessels employed during the winter in surveys of various groups of islands, of importance as lying in the track of the whalers, as far south as the Society Islands, and westward to the Kingsmill Group; while the

commander with the Vincennes and accompanied by the scientific corps made extensive tours around and through the Sandwich Islands.

These latter islands deserved special notice at the hands of an American expedition, because they constitute the most natural and valuable stopping place for American shipping in the Pacific, and because a moral bond unites them most happily with the Western Republic, as the origin of a philanthropy and a Christian benevolence, whence have arisen, by the blessing of God, their incipient civilization, their recognized national independence, and their wondrous religious development. In prosecuting these researches, Lieutenant Com. Wilkes, with a party of officers and men, accomplished an ascent of the noted volcanic mountain, Mauna Loa, on the island of Hawaii. On the very summit of this noble mountain, at an altitude of upward of thirteen thousand feet, an observatory station was established especially with reference to the motions of the pendulum, and amid the barrenness, the snow storms, and the various discomforts of such a height, and unusual fatigues incident to a rarefied atmosphere, a series of observations was continued through three weeks. But all these toils were amply compensated for, in the sublimity of the prospects enjoyed, and by an opportunity of examining the most grand and wonderful volcanic craters in the world.

The Porpoise having returned in March, and been subjected to necessary repairs, sailed, in company with the Vincennes, from the harbor of Honolulu, on the 5th of April, 1841. In twenty-two days these vessels were off the bar at the mouth of the Columbia river; but the condition of the bar at the time induced Lieutenant Com. Wilkes to proceed directly to the north, to attend to contemplated surveys in the waters adjoining the southern part of Vancouver's Island. These surveying duties were very thoroughly performed. Two expeditions were also fitted out for the interior; one of which crossed over to the Columbia river, and visited the stations of the Hudson's Bay Company at Astoria and Vancouver, and the other penetrated through the country, to a point higher up on the Columbia. These tours have added much to the knowledge of a portion of the extensive territory of Oregon.

In the midst of these occupations at the north, the commander was recalled to the Columbia river by the news of the unfortunate loss of the Peacock, whose course, until its abrupt termination, we must now trace. On the 2d of December, 1840, accompanied by the tender Flying Fish, she left Oahu. Her cruise extended through several groups lying to the south and west of the Sandwich Islands. Besides searching for uncertain and detached islands, she visited the Samoan Islands, Bowditch Island, Ellice's and Kingsmill Group, and by this circuitous route again reaching Oahu about the middle of June, 1841, she touched for supplies and bore away for Columbia river. On this cruise she sailed over nineteen thousand miles of ocean. At one of the Samoan Islands, Lieut. Com. Hudson made a demand for the surrender of a native who had murdered a white man. In violation of the regulations assented to during a former visit of the expedition, the chiefs refused to give him up, and at the same time sent insulting messages to the Americans, and bid defiance to their military power. Hence it became necessary to give another of those painful lessons, which had already been repeated twice at other

islands. Lieut. Com. Hudson brought the broadside of the *Peacock* to bear upon the land, to cover the party making an attack in the boats. After all their bravado no natives were to be found, and the party having landed, burned their towns without opposition. The usual information respecting the condition and disposition of the natives was gathered, the prospects for commerce were observed, and surveys calculated to be of service to mariners were made.

At Drummond's Island, one of the Kingsmill Group, a serious difficulty arose with the treacherous natives, which led again to the exercise of military force, and in this case to the loss of life. A large party, under Lieut. Com. Hudson himself, was on shore for purposes of curiosity. The natives sought to separate and entice the men in different directions. They also pilfered loose articles about the persons of the visitors, and finally made actual hostile demonstrations. Wishing to avoid a collision, Lieut. Com. Hudson called the men together and took to his boats. It was now found that one man was missing. Supposing that he had been enticed away, and would be brought back for the purpose of receiving a liberal ransom, Lieut. Com. Hudson returned to his ship. The next day nothing could be learned respecting the missing seaman, and offers of ransom were not regarded. As these islanders were more ferocious and less hospitable than any previously visited, it was now concluded that the man had been treacherously murdered. It was determined, therefore, to make a strong demonstration, so as either to ransom him if alive, or failing in this, to inflict a severe punishment. Having waited another day, and not a canoe from this part of the island coming near the ship, Lieut. Com. Hudson ordered the tender to a position, where she could cover the landing of the attacking party. This consisted of eighty men in seven boats, under the command of Lieutenant Walker.

The savages, to the number of five hundred and upward, fearlessly awaited their approach on the beach, brandishing their weapons, and showing a determination to stand their ground. A parley, with a renewed offer of ransom, was unavailing. A few shots were then fired, bringing down some of the chiefs, and a rocket was discharged into the crowd. The latter weapon caused some temporary confusion, but they soon rallied and showed a determination to offer a serious resistance, being evidently naturally warlike, and also over confident in their numbers. The order was therefore given for a general discharge of musketry. This produced the desired effect, for they retreated, though somewhat reluctantly, and left the beach open to the landing of the troops. The council-house and town were soon reduced to ashes, and the party re-embarked without any loss. Twelve of the natives were killed, and about three hundred houses burnt, with all the property in them, which the inhabitants, over sanguine of victory, had not removed.

Lieut. Com. Hudson, finding that all the objects of his cruise could not be accomplished in the time at his disposal, was unable to proceed further to the westward, as he had intended, but was obliged to shape his course toward the coast of Oregon, in order to coöperate in the surveys of that region. On the 18th of July he attempted the difficult task of entering the Columbia river. The mouth of this great river on the western slope of our continent, is noted for the difficulties it presents

to the navigator. The distance between the headlands is several miles, making it well-nigh impossible to indicate any exact bearings; an extensive bar stretches across the entrance, on which the mighty swell of the Pacific is constantly breaking, and over which tides and cross-tides rush with unusual strength and velocity; and at the time the Peacock endeavored to enter, there were no pilots worthy of the name. Lieut. Com. Hudson was furnished with the best sailing directions which could be obtained, and himself undertook to pilot his vessel in. Steering for the point where the water appeared smooth, the ship proceeded for a few minutes, when she struck on the bar. Every effort was directly made to work her off, but the sea kept driving her farther on. The wind now rose, and the tide began to ebb, thus producing a sea, in which no boat could live, and which threatened soon to thump the ship to pieces on the bar. It became necessary to work the pumps, the vessel beginning to leak badly. During the night the sea made complete breaches over her, keeping her deck constantly flooded. In the morning, however, it went down somewhat, so as to admit of hoisting out the boats, which now began to carry the crew, and a few of the valuables ashore. They made two trips during the morning, and landed all but Lieut. Com. Hudson and Lieut. Walker and some thirty men. By noon the sea rose again, so as to render it impossible for the boats to reach the ship. In making this attempt one of them was turned over end for end, and the crew rescued only through the nearness of the other boats. Perceiving this, Lieut. Com. Hudson made signal for the boats to return to the shore.

The ship was now a thorough wreck; her masts cut away, the water up to her berth-deck, and the sea beating upon the helpless hull with blows that told of a speedy ruin. At five o'clock in the afternoon the officers in charge of the boats were able to get them alongside the ship, when Lieut. Com. Hudson and his remaining companions were borne joyfully to the shore. In the morning no more could be seen of the Peacock, which had survived so many perils amid polar ice-fields and tropical reefs. The crew, of course, were landed in a very destitute condition. They moved up to Astoria and encamped, where the stores for the squadron had been deposited in advance, which furnished them with food; while, through the kindness of the agent of the Hudson's Bay Company, they were provided with clothing.

The loss of so important a vessel necessarily compelled some changes in plans. An American brig, at the time in the river, was purchased on favorable terms, and taken into the service under the name of the Oregon. This accommodated a portion of the crew of the Peacock, while the rest were distributed among the other vessels. The Vincennes was sent to San Francisco, to survey that harbor, and the river Sacramento. A party was also dispatched over land, to proceed down the same river and rejoin at San Francisco. Lieutenant Com. Wilkes transferred his flag to the Porpoise, which, with the Oregon, engaged in the survey of the Columbia as far as navigable. This survey being accomplished, the vessels were again reunited in the spacious harbor of San Francisco. In the mean time the boats of the Vincennes had sailed up the Sacramento, visiting points, which have since, through the new element introduced into the history of California, become so familiar to American ears. Tho

party which undertook the land journey from Oregon, was conducted with great skill and courage by Lieutenant Emmons, over a difficult route and through hostile tribes of Indians. This hostility was particularly unfortunate, as it obliged the party to keep more closely together, thus preventing those excursions which would have furnished a more extensive knowledge of the country and of the condition and numbers of the inhabitants.

On the 21st of November the expedition sailed from San Francisco. Its route now led it again across the Pacific; the loss of the Peacock requiring a stop at the Sandwich Islands for supplies. The instructions allowed a visit to Japan; but so much time had already elapsed, it was found impossible to accomplish it. On leaving Oahu, the Porpoise and Oregon sailed in the direction of the coast of Japan, with the purpose of examining such islands and reefs as lay in their course. The Vincennes and the tender kept to the southward of the course of the former vessels, still in the general westerly direction, passing through the Ladrone Islands, and giving particular attention to the settlement of some doubtful positions of islands and reefs. The existence of several of these was found to be imaginary. On the 12th of January, 1842, the latter vessels anchored in the bay of Manilla. Thence they sailed into and through the Sooloo Sea, making a careful and accurate survey of it, which was greatly needed, the existing charts being incorrect in the extreme. Another good service was accomplished here in securing a treaty between the Sultan of Sooloo and the United States, by which the former engaged to afford full protection to the commercial vessels of the latter, and all privileges granted to the most favored nations, and also to afford aid to the shipwrecked vessels of any nations. This arrangement was effected with a noted piratical power.

Lieut. Com. Ringgold in the Porpoise, and Lieut. Com. Carr in the Oregon, kept to the westward and northward, after leaving the Sandwich Islands; but meeting with unfavorable weather, they could not proceed to the coast of Japan, and therefore turned to the south, and ran on nearly the same track as the Vincennes. In February the squadron again met at Singapore, where at the same time were the United States frigate Constellation, and sloop of war Boston. The Flying Fish was sold at Singapore; it not being deemed safe to undertake the voyage home in her. On the 26th of February the remaining vessels got under way for their homeward voyage; the Porpoise and the Oregon sailing in company and stopping at St. Helena and Rio de Janeiro; the Vincennes alone making short visits at Cape Town and St. Helena. During the month of June, 1842, they all arrived at New York, and safely terminated their long cruise.

The results of the expedition, as constituting valuable additions to the departments of knowledge embraced in its plan and purpose, cannot be questioned. The opportunity for discovery of a brilliant character is not in this age furnished to any navigator. But in the grand work for the substantial improvement of the condition of mankind in the way of promoting peaceful intercourse and in rendering such intercourse more safe and expeditious, the American exploring squadron has done good service. The character of the results in a commercial aspect may be gathered

somewhat from the imperfect account which has been given; while a just idea of the amount of information collected in relation to the various countries visited, can only be gained by a perusal of the full and official account.

The scientific corps were on all occasions diligent and enthusiastic, and their labors are attested by the large collections which they have made, illustrating the natural sciences, and by the observations and examinations on all subjects intrusted to them, which they have patiently accomplished.

Toward the close of the year 1842, a tragical and most unhappy occurrence took place on board a vessel of the American navy, which, for various reasons, produced at the time a profound sensation throughout the country. The United States brig *Somers*, Commander Mackenzie, sailed from New York on the 13th of September, with dispatches for the squadron on the coast of Africa. She left Cape Mesurado on the 10th of November, on her homeward voyage, standing across to the Leeward Islands, so as to touch at St. Thomas on her return to our own coast. Some days before reaching the latter island, on the 26th of November, a midshipman was arrested on the charge of intended mutiny. The events which led to this arrest were affirmed to be as follows: On the preceding evening, this midshipman disclosed to the purser's steward, the particulars of a plan which he had formed for seizing the brig, and converting her into a pirate. He conveyed to the mind of his confidant the conviction of his seriousness respecting such plan, exacted from him an oath of secrecy, and informed him that about twenty of the crew were already engaged in the project. The conversation was continued for some time, and during it, a seaman took part in it, evincing that he was one of those already enlisted in the enterprise. The next day the particulars of this plot were conveyed by the purser's steward to the first lieutenant, and by him were laid before Commander Mackenzie.

After his arrest the suspected midshipman was ironed, and placed on the quarter-deck, under charge of an officer. The officers assert that symptoms of discontent and insubordination now began to be manifested by the crew — that they collected in knots upon the deck, engaging in conversation, casting frequent glances toward the quarter-deck, and separating on the approach of an officer. On the 27th, the main-top-gallant-mast was carried away, in executing an order. This injury to the vessel the commander supposed to have been done by design on the part of the mutineers, that in the confusion they might effect the rescue of their leader, and carry out their plan of seizing the vessel. No such attempt, however, was made. The new mast was rigged, and all the damage was repaired before night. This done, the suspicions of the officers as to the fidelity of the crew being greatly increased, two more arrests were made. The persons arrested were the boatswain's mate, doing duty as boatswain in the brig, and the seaman mentioned before as an accomplice. These men were also heavily ironed, and placed upon the quarter-deck.

The officers were now all armed, and were required to be increasingly vigilant in watching the prisoners and the crew. Still were the officers entirely uncertain as to the extent of the mutiny and the general disposition of the men. They were of opinion that others were at large who should be confined; but as the vessel was destitute of marines, they

considered themselves inadequate to the guarding of many prisoners. The 28th and 29th passed with no very marked events, the men doing duty, though, as the officers thought, with manifest reluctance and discontent on the part of some. Yet there was no overt act of mutiny, and no attempt at a rescue of the prisoners. Certain papers were found in the possession of the midshipman at the time of his arrest, which contained in Greek characters the names of individuals who, he had pretended, were certain to join the enterprise; of some who were doubtful and likely to take part or acquiesce in it; and of others to be retained as necessary, even against their wills. Several of these were constantly watched, and some of them were supposed to evince suspicious signs. Attempts at communication between the prisoners, who were still kept under the eye of officers on the quarter-deck, and the crew, were also observed. The commander therefore felt constrained, on the 30th, to make more arrests, so that the prisoners now amounted to seven.

In the mean time, early on the morning of the 30th, the commander addressed a communication to his officers, asking for their opinion as to the disposition to be made of the three men first arrested, whom he considered the main conspirators. A council of officers therefore assembled in the wardroom, composed of the only lieutenant on board, the surgeon, the purser, the acting master who was a passed-midshipman, and three midshipmen. Three younger acting midshipmen were not included in the council, but during its sitting, had charge of the vessel, in company with the commander. This council examined several witnesses, whose statements and opinions were duly recorded. Their deliberations did not take the form of a trial, and cannot in any just sense be called one, as the accused did not appear before them, and were granted no opportunity for explanation or defence. Indeed, the object of their investigation and consultation was to advise their commander, whether in their opinion the necessity of the case was so extreme and urgent, as to require the exercise of that arbitrary power, which, without question, must at times be within the discretion of military authority. That this necessity did now exist was the unanimous opinion of these officers; and this opinion they reported to their commander on the morning of December 1st. They considered that in the state of the crew, as they viewed it, it was impossible, with any good hope of security to the rightful authority of the commander, or to the lives of those loyal to the flag, to carry the vessel into the nearest port of the United States. They also deemed it an important naval principle, that a ship of war should not apply for assistance in a case like the present to any foreign friendly power. In these views Commander Mackenzie coincided. He decided that it was not his duty to run for the nearest friendly port in order to obtain assistance. His desire to reach even the island of St. Thomas, without resorting to the stern law of necessity, was caused by the hope that he might there find the United States ship *Vandalia*, and not by the purpose to solicit the interference of the government of that island. But in his opinion this alternative was not now left; the safety of the vessel requiring the immediate execution of the three prominent mutineers.

On the morning of December 1st, it was accordingly announced to them, that they must prepare for a speedy death. Somewhat more than

an hour elapsed, during which the unhappy men were occupied in conversation with the officers, and in communicating their last wishes and messages to their friends. The condemned midshipman and the seaman first named as an accomplice, admitted their guilt, and the justice of their punishment; but the boatswain's mate died protesting his innocence. The midshipman also declared that the latter was innocent. All hands were called to witness punishment, and the men were stationed at the different points where the condemned were to be executed, while officers stood over them with drawn cutlasses, having orders to cut down any who faltered in inflicting the dreadful penalty. When every thing was adjusted, and partings had been exchanged, the commander gave the order, the signal gun was fired, the national colors were hoisted, and simultaneously the three condemned men were swinging at the yard-arm. The commander then addressed the men, after which they separated and returned to their respective duties. After night had set in, the solemn funeral service was read by the light of the battle-lanterns, and the bodies were committed to the sea. It need hardly be said, that this extreme act of discipline had its designed effect. No symptoms of a mutinous or disaffected spirit were manifested by the crew, and the brig, after touching at St. Thomas, arrived at New York on the 14th of December.

As soon as the facts of this most painful case became known, it produced a deep excitement in the public mind. A court of inquiry, consisting of three senior captains, was convened in the case on the 28th of December, and sat until the 19th of January. The finding of this court was a complete justification of Commander Mackenzie and his officers. Notwithstanding this decision, the former was arrested, and a court-martial was appointed for his trial, to meet at New York on the 1st of February, 1843. This court sat for forty days, and finally acquitted him. An attempt was also made, by the friends of the boatswain's mate, to obtain in the civil court, an indictment for murder against the commander of the vessel. The judge, before whom the question was argued, charged the grand jury, that it was not competent for a civil tribunal to take up the case while it was pending before a naval court. This was while the court of inquiry was investigating the affair. It remains to be stated that several more arrests, from among the crew, were made after the vessel reached New York, but no charges were ever preferred against any of the prisoners, and they were all dismissed from custody without trial.

CHAPTER V.

Capture of Monterey by Com. Jones—Relations of United States and Mexico—Commencement of hostilities—Com. Sloat's movements in the Pacific—Com. Stockton assumes the command of Pacific squadron—Co-operates with Major Fremont—Enters Los Angeles—Los Angeles retaken by the Mexicans—Com. Stockton forms a junction with Gen. Kearney—Battles of San Gabriel and Mesa—Recapture of Los Angeles—Com. Shubrick assumes the command of the squadron—Guaymas, La Paz, and San Jose taken—Capture of Mazatlan—Affair at Muleje and Guaymas—First defence of San Jose by Lieut. Heywood—Various movements on the coast—Second siege and defence of San Jose—Garrison relieved by Commander Du Pont—Quiet restored in Lower California.

IN the year 1842, Commodore Thomas Ap. C. Jones was in command of the United States naval force in the Pacific. During the latter part of the summer of that year, he was lying in the port of Callao, with the flag-ship *United States* 44, the sloop of war *Cyane* 20, the sloop of war *Dale* 16, and the schooner *Shark* 12. While at this place, he received a Mexican newspaper containing a manifesto from the Mexican government, respecting the relations between that country and the United States, from which he considered it probable that war existed between the two nations. In an American newspaper he also found a report to the effect that Great Britain had made purchase of California from Mexico. There is no doubt that for some time before the Mexican war, secret negotiations had been carried on by British agents, having in view the cession of some portion of Mexican territory to the latter power; Mexico being, it should be remembered, largely in debt to British citizens. But nothing of this kind was ever really effected. At the same time that Com. Jones had his suspicions awakened by these rumors of cession, there happened to be an English squadron of some force concentrated in this part of the Pacific; and the Dublin frigate, the flag-ship of Rear Admiral Thomas, had looked into Callao, and, after a short stay, had suddenly departed in the night, without giving any intimation of her destination, but bound, it was supposed, to the coast of North America.

The American commodore had evidently been put upon the alert by his own government; the question of the annexation of Texas, then in agitation, having given unusual interest and prominence to Mexican affairs, and, in the event of a war between the two countries, it being manifestly the policy of the United States to seize upon California. It seemed quite likely to Com. Jones, that the British admiral was now intending to take formal possession of the territory, supposed to have been ceded, and he deemed it his duty to forestall or resist him in any such plan. He consequently sailed suddenly from Callao on the 7th of September with the entire squadron, standing out to the westward. The *Shark* was soon sent back to Callao, and, shortly after, the *Dale* was detached with orders to proceed to Panama and land a special messenger with dispatches for the home government. Previously, however, to the separation of the latter vessel from the squadron, a council of officers, consisting of Captain Armstrong of the *United States*, Commander Stribling of the *Cyane*, and Commander Dornin of the *Dale*, was called

by Com. Jones, for the purpose of giving their advice as to the course proper to be pursued.

Their decision on the main question proposed, was, that "in case the United States and Mexico are at war, it would be our bounden duty to possess ourselves of every point and port in California, which we could take and defend without much embarrassment to our operations on the ocean," and that "we should consider the military occupation of the Californias by any European power, but more particularly by our great commercial rival, England, and especially at this particular juncture, as a measure so decidedly hostile to the true interest of the United States, as not only to warrant our so doing, but to make it our duty to forestall the design of Admiral Thomas, if possible, by supplanting the Mexican flag by that of the United States, at Monterey, San Francisco, and any other tenable points within the territory said to have been recently ceded by secret treaty to Great Britain." The United States and Cyane then proceeded to the northward, crowding all sail for the coast of Mexico. While on the way, Com. Jones, in writing to the secretary of the navy, after alluding to the fact of having received no communication since his sailing orders of nine months previous, says: "In all that I may do, I shall confine myself strictly to what I may suppose would be your views and orders, had you the means of communicating them to me."

On the afternoon of October 19th, the two ships anchored in the harbor of Monterey. The Mexican flag floated over the town. There was no sign of British authority; so that the commodore was successful in being beforehand in respect to the admiral's supposed design. His suspicions were so far confirmed by what he heard and saw, however, that he concluded to summon the governor to surrender. The next morning the articles of capitulation were signed, the Mexican authorities meanwhile declaring themselves ignorant of the existence of any hostilities. No opposition being offered, the capture was an easy one, and the American flag soon rose in the place of the Mexican, over a dilapidated fortification mounting eleven guns. A proclamation was also immediately issued by Com. Jones, designed to explain the purpose of the American commander in this capture, and to reconcile the inhabitants to the change of their allegiance.

The next day Com. Jones discovered, through late Mexican newspapers and commercial letters from Mazatlan, that the facts were by no means what he had supposed; that there was no war, and that there was no evidence that the idea of cession to Great Britain was entertained by the Mexican government. He had, in fact, seized upon a province of a country, with which his own government was still at peace. He, therefore, immediately completed the act of retrocession to the original authorities, with all proper and customary marks of respect, and retired from before the place.

[The following, to page 67, was dictated by Mr. Cooper in the summer of 1851.]

This somewhat precipitate movement on the part of Commodore Jones compelled a change in the command, as a species of propitiatory offering to the Mexicans. He was recalled, and Commodore Sloat was sent out as his successor. No censure, however, was ever passed upon the former, for his very decided movement, and it is to be supposed, that

the vigilance of the officer was acceptable to the government at home, rather than otherwise. In point of fact, there were several years during which the fate of California may be said to have been suspended in the political scales. Should Texas be annexed, as was the wish of her own people, though so strongly opposed by England and France, it was almost certain that a collision with Mexico must follow. The latter country had, unfortunately for the cause of peace, been guilty of many acts of aggression to provoke hostilities, and there was only too much ground for the course of policy subsequently pursued by the American government. Errors and wrongs there were, no doubt, committed by both nations; but on the whole, there is much reason to think that the United States had the best of the argument, on purely national principles.

Texas was independent *de facto*, and she had become so by a marked breach of faith on the part of the central government of Mexico. It is true that a belt of country, extending to the northward of the Rio Grande, might be deemed fairly in dispute between the two nations: a state of things that certainly gave to one party as much the right of possession as to the other. Whether the Nueces, or the Great River of the North, was to be the dividing line, was a question for diplomacy to decide, unless an appeal should be made to arms, in which event, the debatable territory would, as a matter of course, follow the ordinary contingencies of war. Such a state of things, with two armies in close proximity, was not likely to continue long. Collisions might be hourly expected, and, indeed, did soon occur, between small parties of the contending forces, until matters proceeded so far as to induce the Americans to open a fire upon the Mexicans, in the city of Matamoras, opposite to which town the former had constructed a fort. This led to an attempt to carry that work by rapid siege, and the crossing of a force of several thousand men, under the orders of General Ampudia. It was while marching to the relief of Fort Brown, as this post was called, that the armies—that of the Mexicans, now under the orders of General Arista, and that of the Americans, under the command of Brevet Brigadier-general Taylor—first came fairly in contact, at a place called Palo Alto; the disparity in force was greatly in favor of the Mexicans, and the result of this brilliant cannonading showed the great superiority of the American arms in any thing like a serious conflict. The more brilliant affair of Resaca de la Palma, succeeded the next day, and war was shortly afterward formally declared by both nations, the proclamation of the United States being dated the 12th of May, 1846, and that of Mexico, the 23d of the same month.

A declaration of war between countries such as Mexico and the United States, very naturally created strong apprehensions of what might be the effect on the widely spread commerce of the latter, under a loose and rapacious system of privateering. It was naturally expected that Mexico would have recourse to such an expedient to injure her adversary, whose shipping whitened the ocean, while there was scarcely a Mexican flag to be met with, unless it might be at the peak of some insignificant coaster. It is understood that an early attempt was made by agents of the Mexican government, to dispose of commissions for privateers among the seamen of the islands; but the three principal governments having colonies in and about the gulf, had the wisdom and good faith not to encourage such

a system of rapacious plundering. The authorities of Cuba in particular, took very firm ground, and effectually prevented any thing like a hostile armament from quitting its jurisdiction. A solitary vessel, at a later day, was captured in the Mediterranean, but was restored on the demand of the American government. In a word, it may as well be said here, that a war which menaced so many maritime disasters to the commerce of the country, did not, in fact, produce one. And the trade of the United States continued to pursue its customary objects, with nearly as much confidence and security, as in a time of profound peace. The large and well-manned liners which then carried on most of the trade between New York and Europe, took in a heavy gun or two, and relied for the means of defence on this slight armament, and the number of passengers that were passing to and fro.

One of the first measures of the government was to add several small cruisers purchased from among the fast-sailing schooners of the different ports, temporarily to the service. These, equipped with a single heavy gun, and additional armament, placed under the command of old lieutenants, were sent to join the squadron of Commodore Conner in the gulf. Other vessels were added to that officer's force, which was soon ample for any of the probable circumstances of a maritime war against such an enemy. Vera Cruz was closely watched, and the American flag was soon seen hovering around all the little ports in the gulf, that were then under the control of the enemy.

On the other side of the continent, a different state of things existed. The trade was so much scattered, and, as a whole, so well prepared to take care of itself, more especially in the whalers, that little apprehension seems to have been felt, at any time, on the subject of privateers. The delicacy of the relations between Mexico and certain European states, in connection with the two Californias, principally occupied the attention of Commodore Sloat, the officer then in command. It was understood to be the policy of England to effect, through her merchants, in the event of hostilities between this country and Mexico, such a transfer of these two provinces, as would give them a claim of a very embarrassing nature, in the shape of security for money lent, and to be lent.

Commodore Sloat lay at Mazatlan, in the *Savannah* 44, in company with different smaller vessels, which came and went as circumstances required, closely watching the course of events in the Gulf of Mexico. He had a line of active communication across the continent, by means of different mercantile houses, and on the 7th of June, he received through that channel, the very important information of the result of the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. Although without particular instructions to meet the especial emergency, war not having then been proclaimed by either party, this officer came to a prompt and wise determination. "If," said he, "the Mexicans have been the assailants in these battles, it is my duty to employ the naval force under my orders, in diverting their efforts, and in retaliating for these hostilities; and if on the other hand, the hostile movement has come from our own side, the duty of every officer, in separate command, to sustain such a movement, is so obvious as to require no vindication." He sailed on the 8th for the northward, leaving the *Warren* at Mazatlan, to wait for further

intelligence. The Savannah reached Monterey on the 2d of July. Here the Commodore found the Cyane and Levant, and ascertained that the Portsmouth was at San Francisco. The place was summoned on the morning of the 7th, but the officer in command referred to the commanding general of California for the answer.

The previous arrangements having been made, a party of two hundred and fifty seamen and marines landed under the immediate command of Capt. Wm. Mervine. This force raised the standard of the United States, under a salute of twenty-one guns. At the same time a proclamation announcing the transfer of flag was published in both Spanish and English. Orders were sent to Commander Montgomery of the Portsmouth, to take possession also of the Bay of San Francisco, which was done on the 9th. Commodore Sloat took the other necessary measures to secure his bloodless conquest, and to preserve order in the country.

On the afternoon of the 15th of July, the Congress arrived from Valparaiso, by way of the Sandwich Islands, and Commodore Stockton reported himself for duty to his senior officer. On the 16th, Sir George F. Seymour, British admiral commanding in the Pacific, arrived in the Collingwood 80; the civilities of the port were tendered to him by Commodore Sloat, in the usual manner; he was supplied with some spare spars, and on the 23d, sailed for the Sandwich Islands.

The appearance of the English commander-in-chief, his pacific relations with the Americans, and his early departure, had the effect to destroy all hope among the Californians, of assistance from that quarter.

On the 29th of July, Commodore Sloat shifted his pennant to the Levant, and sailed for Panama, on his way to the United States. The squadron, of course, was left under the command of Commodore Stockton. Previously to the departure of Commodore Sloat, however, a body of about one hundred and fifty riflemen was sent down to San Diego, under Captain Fremont.* This movement was made to intercept the communications of General Castro, the Mexican commander-in-chief, with the more southern provinces. The Congress was ordered to sail on the 30th for San Pedro, to take possession there. There happened to be at the time within the limits of California, an expedition of a scientific character, under the orders of an officer of the topographical engineers, of great activity and merit, of the name of Fremont, who had long been employed on the duty of exploring the whole region between the Mississippi and the Pacific Ocean, more especially as connected with the communication with the territory of Oregon. This gentleman conceived himself injured by some of the proceedings of the authorities of California, and in danger of being captured, if not destroyed, by the policy of the Mexicans, through their apprehensions of what might be his real objects. Singularly enough, the two parties would seem to have been apprehensive of each other's intentions, and both had recourse to the strong hand, in order to secure themselves against the hostility of their supposed

* This detachment was carried down to San Diego in the Cyane, Commander Du Pont; which vessel arrived before the place on the 29th of July. The American flag was hoisted by Lieut. Rowan of the Cyane, on the afternoon of the same day, at the Presidio, five miles distant from the port; and the place was immediately garrisoned by the marine guard. A portion of the troops under Captain Fremont was landed that day, and the rest the next morning.—Ed.

adversaries. Fortunately for the American officer, there was a sufficient number of trappers, hunters and other adventurers, who had crossed from the States, to be met with on the plains of the upper country, and as these men were as loyal to their flag as they were daring and reckless, their enterprising and energetic leader soon collected enough of them to render himself formidable in a region where revolutions had often been effected by the merest handfuls of men.

San Francisco was taken possession of on the 9th day of July, by Commander Montgomery of the Portsmouth, and the whole of that very noble and important bay became, at once, substantially subject to the American flag. By the 11th, the flag was flying at Suter's fort on the Sacramento, at Bodega on the coast, at Sonoma, and at Yerba Buena, or what is commonly called San Francisco. Such was the state of things, when Commodore Stockton in the Congress 44, appeared off Monterey. This officer had left home on the 25th of October, 1845; he had touched at Rio and the usual ports on the western coast of South America, and at Honolulu, whence, having there heard of the commencement of the war between the United States and Mexico, he had hastened with the ardor that belonged to his character, to participate in the events then in progress along the coast between Cape St. Lucas and the frontiers of Oregon. As Commodore Sloat had effected the principal object of his remaining out longer than his health rendered expedient, a transfer of command took place, and Commodore Stockton, hoisting the blue pennant, in place of the red, now took charge of the whole of the American force then supposed to be in the Pacific. The government, however, aware of the great importance of securing the command of those distant seas, and jealous, perhaps, of the views of France and England, neither of which countries has ever been particularly diffident in appropriating to its own purposes territory of any part of the world that might be found convenient to possess, had given its attention to the increase of the squadron in that distant quarter of the world. The Independence 54, Captain Lavalette, and wearing the broad pennant of Commodore William B. Shubrick, sailed from Boston with orders for the north-west coast, on the 29th of August, 1846. At the same time the Columbus 80, Captain Wyman, and under the orders of Commodore Biddle, was on her way from China and Japan, with orders to touch at Lima for instructions as to her future course. This was assembling a very formidable force along the coast, and giving effectual security to the recent conquests, so far as the interference of any European power might reasonably be anticipated. The Independence appeared off Valparaiso on the 2d of December, and while standing off and on, she made a large sail to the northward and westward, which, on being signaled, showed the number of the Columbus. The two ships went in that morning and anchored, when Commodore Biddle, after examining the instructions of his junior, decided to send the Independence to the coast of California direct, while he proceeded in person in his own ship to Callao, in quest of his orders from home. The two vessels sailed shortly after, and the Independence reached her point of destination on the 22d of January, 1847, after the short run of forty days. Here, then, was another transfer in the naval command in this part of the Pacific, and Commodore Shubrick superseded Commodore Stockton by public proclamation.

The intervening time, however, between the day when Commodore Sloat lowered his pennant, and that on which Commodore Stockton imitated his example, had been one of great activity and decision on the part of the vessels of the navy. Finding no enemy to contend with on his own element, and every way disposed to assist the views of the government at home, without shrinking from responsibility, Commodore Stockton had determined to extend and secure the conquests made by his predecessor, by means of expeditions inland, principally conducted by the officers and people of the shipping.

It is due both to Commodore Sloat who took possession of Monterey in person, and to Captain Montgomery in the Portsmouth, who took possession of San Francisco, to say that both these officers seem to have executed their delicate duties with great decision, prudence and humanity. Their force was too great to permit resistance, it is true, and there was the certainty of its being able to maintain the new authorities within reasonable distance of the coast. But the elements of discord existed in the interior. California had long been subject to what might be termed domestic revolutions of its own, and it was no unusual thing for its government to be temporarily changed by the rising of some local military adventurer. The struggle between Capt. Fremont at the north, and Gen. Castro, the Mexican who took upon himself to resist what he chose to consider an invasion, had prepared the way for the events that succeeded. On assuming the command, Commodore Stockton did not lose a moment in putting himself in relations with this active officer, and in projecting an expedition into the interior that should at once bring the capital of the province under the control of the flag.

Although California was very thinly peopled, it possessed a population singularly well adapted to the emergencies of the moment. The man was almost identified with his horse, and the latter, an exceedingly active and hardy animal, was capable of making long marches in a day. As the distances were great, this species of force would obviously become very formidable, when well conducted and amply supplied. Although the Americans had certainly a party in the country, it was small, and confined to those principally who dwelt near the great ports. The abortive movement of Commodore Jones naturally made even these persons cautious, and it was not difficult, under all the circumstances of the case, for Governor Pico, the Chief of the state, to rally a force inland that, possessing rapidity of movement and a perfect knowledge of the country, might render itself very formidable to the dispersed parties of the Americans. The political capital of the state was at Los Angeles, which is less than thirty miles from the sea, and near the southern extremity of the state. The local legislature being in session at the moment of the invasion, it was in the power of the Mexican authorities, to concentrate their efforts and to make a rally for at least the command of the interior.

So important did it seem to all parties to secure this point, and to look down any thing like opposition in that part of the country, that, even before Commodore Sloat left the station, preparations were made to effect this object. Captain Fremont had come in with his party, and a battalion of volunteers was formed, consisting principally of trappers, hunters, and other persons well suited for the service that was about to

be required of them. Its numbers were about one hundred and sixty men, and it was regularly received into the service of the United States as a volunteer corps.

When Commodore Sloat left the coast of California for Panama in the Levant, Commodore Stockton found himself at the head of a squadron, consisting of the Congress and Savannah frigates, and the sloops Portsmouth, Cyane and Warren, together with the store-ship Erie. It was thought necessary to keep the Portsmouth still at San Francisco; the Warren was yet lying at Mazatlan, and the Erie was at the Sandwich Islands, leaving the Savannah at Monterey for its protection as the base of all the operations in that region.

Commodore Stockton sailed in the Congress on the 1st of August, bound for San Pedro, a small port of difficult entrance for a large vessel, nearly abreast of the capital of the state. As the ship proceeded south, a landing was made at Santa Barbara, where the flag was shifted and a small force was left in possession. This was in effect occupying every available port between Lower California and the northern boundary of the upper state. The Congress arrived off San Pedro on the 6th of August; the Cyane had previously reached San Diego, a port still further south, where the battalion of Major Fremont had landed, principally with the object of obtaining horses, a service not easily effected, as the enemy had early taken precautions against the movement. A force had been organized on board the frigate to form a small brigade on shore, and instant preparations were made for landing. At this point the Commodore received a communication from General Castro, who claimed to be authorized to enter into negotiations with him; but this step, being accompanied with the preliminary demand that no further movement should be made until these negotiations were terminated, had no results. It was so obviously the policy of the Mexicans to gain time, that little heed was given to the representations of their agents. The party on shore was not ready to proceed until the 11th of August, when it marched to the northward, or in the direction of the capital. On the afternoon of that very day, intelligence was brought the Americans, that the Mexicans had buried their guns, and that all the functionaries of the government had retired inland, or, as it was supposed, toward Sonora. On the 13th, the Commodore made a junction with the battalion of Major Fremont, and the whole force entered Los Angeles without opposition, in the course of that day.

Commodore Stockton now determined to organize a civil government for the entire state, and to administer justice in its name. At the head of this government he placed Major Fremont. Having effected these arrangements, he returned to the coast on the 2d of September, re-embarked on the 3d, and sailed on the 5th, touching at Santa Barbara, to take off the small party left there; the ship proceeded to Monterey, where every thing was found tranquil, though rumors were in circulation of an intended rising among the Indians at the north. The Savannah was immediately sent up the coast, where she was soon joined by the Congress off San Francisco. Here it was ascertained that the rumors were false, and that the whole northern region of the country was tranquil. About the close of the month, however a courier arrived from Captain Gillespie of

the marines, who had been left in command at Los Angeles, bringing the important intelligence of a fresh rising at that point, and of his being besieged in the government house. The Savannah, Captain Mervine, was immediately dispatched to San Pedro, for the purpose of affording succor to the besieged party; steps were also taken to form a junction with the corps of Major Fremont who was up at Sacramento at the time. Every effort was made to engage volunteers, and a transport was chartered to convey them to the scene of action. On the 12th of October, Major Fremont reached San Francisco, and immediately embarked on board the transport with his little corps. His point of destination was Santa Barbara, where he was directed to procure as many horses as possible. The Congress sailed in company with the transport, but they separated in a fog. Luckily a merchant vessel from Monterey, bound to the northward, was fallen in with by the frigate, and dispatches were received from Lieutenant Maddox, in command at Monterey, bringing the important intelligence that the place was threatened with an assault, and asking assistance. The frigate ran into the bay, landed a party of fifty men, and some ordnance, and immediately proceeded on. On arriving off San Pedro, the Congress joined the Savannah, on board of which ship was Captain Gillespie and his whole party; that officer having evacuated his position in the government house at Los Angeles under a capitulation entered into with General Flores. Previously to this measure, however, an unsuccessful attempt was made by Captain Mervine to relieve him. A strong party of seamen and marines had been landed, and a march was commenced upon the capital. Unfortunately no provision had been made of any artillery, and on encountering the enemy at a distance of some twelve miles from San Pedro, a smart skirmish took place between the hostile forces. The Mexicans had the advantage of a field-piece, which they appear to have used with great discretion and spirit. Whenever a charge was made it was carried off by the active horses of the mounted men, reopening upon its assailants as soon as a new and favorable position was gained.

The great disadvantage under which he was acting, and the loss of several valuable men, induced Captain Mervine to fall back upon San Pedro, and wait for the Commodore. A new landing was made at the latter point, as soon as the Congress arrived; a force of about 1800 men under General Flores, having been collected outside. Finding the roadstead of San Pedro too open, and too much exposed to the prevalent gales of the season, although it took him farther from his great point of attack, the Commodore was induced to carry the Congress round to San Diego, where was an excellent harbor for such vessels as could enter it. Nothing of the draught of the Congress, however, had ever been known to cross the bar. Every thing was embarked, therefore, and the ship proceeded to the southward. On arriving off the harbor of San Diego, Commodore Stockton received a report from the officer left in command, that this place too was besieged by the enemy; that the stock of provisions was running low; and that he required a reinforcement. This officer was of opinion that the frigate could enter the bay. On making the attempt, however, the ship struck, and she was compelled to return to the anchorage outside. The next day, a prize to the Warren, the

"Malek Adhel," arrived from Monterey with dispatches from Colonel Fremont, who, ascertaining the impossibility of procuring horses at the southward, had returned to the base of operations, and was preparing to march thence, with all his force, to form a junction with the Commodore, on his way into the interior.

It was now necessary to collect beeves as well as horses, and the Savannah was dispatched to Monterey to further the preparations in that quarter. The Congress had proceeded, also, to San Pedro, to carry out the necessary arrangements, but returned as soon as possible to San Diego. So great was the anxiety of the Commodore for the situation of the corps of Lieutenant-colonel Fremont, that meeting with a calm on his way south, he sent in a boat to San Diego, a distance of forty miles, with a communication directed to that officer. On reaching the port it was deemed an object of so great importance to carry the ship within the bar, that a second attempt was made to cross it. This time she succeeded, but she grounded when within the bay. It was found necessary to prepare spars for shoring her up, and at the moment while her people were thus occupied, the Mexicans made an attack upon the town. Notwithstanding the necessity, as it might be, of fighting with one hand, and having a care for the ship with the other, the duty went on with the greatest activity and method. As soon as a sufficient force could be landed, the enemy was repelled by a charge made under the orders of Lieutenant Minor of the navy, and Captain Gillespie of the marines.

Finding it necessary to recruit his horses, and to make harness, saddles, bridles, &c., the delay was improved in the construction of a fort. Runners were now sent out to ascertain the position of the enemy, who was discovered encamped at San Bernardo, distant about thirty miles. Two expeditions were immediately ordered to be got ready. The one under Captain Gillespie to surprise the enemy, in their camp, and the other under Captain Heasley of the volunteer corps, who was sent to the southward in quest of beeves and horses. The latter effected his object, returning with five hundred head of cattle, and nearly one hundred and fifty horses and mules. Before Captain Gillespie was ready to march, however, the Commodore received a dispatch from Brigadier-general Kearney of the U. S. Army, who had effected the passage of the mountains, at the head of a hundred dragoons, and now appeared in California, to take the command of any portion of the army that might have reached there.

The direction of Captain Gillespie's movement was immediately changed, and that officer was ordered to make a junction, as soon as possible, with this new reinforcement. This was on the 6th of December; the same evening the Commodore was notified that an attack had been made by General Kearney upon a strong detachment of the enemy, in their camp at San Pasqual, and it would seem one that was unsuccessful. The following morning, this information was in part corroborated; such an engagement having actually taken place, under circumstances very favorable to the enemy, whose horses were opposed to the broken-down animals of the American detachment. The Americans must have lost near forty men in killed and wounded in this affair. Among the latter was General Kearney himself. This officer had taken

post on an eminence, and where he was able to maintain himself until relieved.

Commodore Stockton at first determined to move with his whole force, to effect a junction with the dragoons; but learning the emergency of the case, and that the enemy was not as strong as had been reported, the plan was changed to sending a quicker moving detachment, embracing only a portion of the force on shore. Rather more than two hundred men marched that night under the orders of Lieutenant Gray. This party effected its object, and General Kearney and his whole party entered the works at San Diego, a few hours later. An arrangement was now made between the Commodore and the General, by which the direction of the military details was to be assumed by the latter officer, while the former of course retained his authority, as the officer in command of the squadron, whether employed afloat or on shore. This delicate arrangement led to some subsequent misunderstandings between the two commanders, though their duty would seem to have been carried on with perfect accord and zeal so long as an enemy appeared before them. It would seem that General Kearney had arrived under the impression that he was to be civil governor of the newly conquered territory; while Commodore Stockton was not disposed to yield his authority so long as it was found necessary to employ any material portion of the crews of the shipping ashore. At a later day this controversy led to some unpleasant collisions, more especially between General Kearney and Lieutenant-colonel Fremont, his subordinate in the line of the army; but as they belong rather to the general history of the country than to a work of the character of this, we shall not dwell on their consequences here.

On the 29th of December, the party of Commodore Stockton was ready to march. Altogether it mustered a force of about six hundred men. Owing to the mountainous character of the country, and the great watchfulness rendered necessary by the activity of the enemy, he did not reach the San Gabriel, until the evening of the 7th of January. Here the Mexicans had erected batteries, and prepared to make a stand. The following day the Americans crossed the river to the north bank, where they found a force of five hundred men and four pieces of artillery ready to receive them. The guns were placed in very favorable positions, while the remainder of the Mexicans, altogether cavalry, were so posted as to command each flank of their assailants. Reaching the margin of the stream, the Commodore dismounted, and led the troops over in person, under a smart fire from the enemy's artillery. A charge up the hill, on the opposite bank, was next made, and the position carried, driving the enemy and his guns before it. At this moment the enemy made an attempt to cut off the pack-horses and beeves, in the rear, but the steadiness of the guard repulsed them. As soon as the American guns were in position on the heights, a smart cannonading commenced, on both sides, but soon terminated by forcing the enemy from the field. The result of this handsome day's work, was the obtaining of the complete command of the Mexican position, where the Americans encamped for the night. The next day, the party of Commodore Stockton advanced upon the town, where it was again met by General Flores on the

plains of Mesa. A hot cannonading succeeded, and the Mexicans made several attempts to charge, but could never be brought within fifty yards of the American lines. After a final effort, General Flores abandoned the defence, and moved off in the direction of Sonora, accompanied by most of his principal officers.

As the enemy had been greatly encouraged by the rough treatment he had given the detachment of dragoons, under General Kearney, and by the success of his expedient in the repulse of the party under Captain Mervine, the result of these two very handsome affairs, produced such a reaction as at once to look down every thing like resistance.

Shortly after re-entering Los Angeles, Commodore Stockton was joined by Colonel Fremont, increasing his force to near one thousand men. A new negotiation was now entered into with Don Andres Pico, the Californian governor, by which the Mexicans stipulated to lay down their arms, and yield quiet possession of the province. Throughout the whole of the foregoing movements, Commodore Stockton exhibited an activity, energy, and spirit that would have done no discredit to the indefatigable Preble. He and his ship seem to have been everywhere, and whatever may be the decision of military etiquette as between the rival competitors for the command of this successful expedition against the enemy's capital, there can be no misapprehension on one subject, and that is, that the Commodore was in the thickest of the fray, and animated his men, not only by his presence but by a very brilliant personal example. According to every usage with which we are acquainted, sea-officers can never come under the command of soldiers. The nautical profession requires a peculiar and specific knowledge, and seamen can only be used, even on shore, with a due regard to their habits and prejudices. There was, however, a peculiar claim on the part of the navy to most of the credit of the military movements in front of Los Angeles. The seamen and marines composed the greater portion of the American force, and the officers of the service held the most important subordinate commands in the detachment. Doubtless an officer as accomplished and as brave as General Kearney, must have been of great assistance on such an occasion; but we confess we see no admitted rule of service short of positive orders from home, that, under the peculiar circumstances of the war in that province, at that particular moment, could have justified Commodore Stockton in carrying on the sort of expedition in which he was then engaged, without retaining his full authority over all who were engaged in it, and who belonged to the navy proper.

Commodore Stockton virtually assumed the command near the close of July, and the whole of the succeeding five months was on his part, a scene of as great exertion, and as bold an assumption of responsibility, as ever yet characterized the service of any man under the flag. We conceive the whole of these movements, marked as they were by so much decision and enterprise, to have been highly creditable to the American arms, and particularly so to that branch of the service of which we are writing.

Shortly after, hearing of the arrival of his senior officer at Monterey, Commodore Stockton struck his pennant on board the Congress, and finding a party about to cross the Rocky Mountains, returned by that

route to the United States. The force that Commodore Shubrick found under his orders on assuming the command of the Pacific squadron, consisted of his own ship, the *Independence* 54; the *Congress* 44, to the command of which vessel he assigned Captain Lavalette, late in the *Independence*; the *Savannah* 44, *Portsmouth* 20, *Warren* 20, *Cyane* 20, *Preble* 16, and *Dale* 16.

A few days after his own arrival, the *Lexington*, store-ship, came in from the Atlantic coast; this vessel brought a company of regular artillery. As soon as the latter landed, all the seamen were withdrawn from the fort, and the town was left in the care of the artillery and marines. Similar arrangements were made at San Francisco, where, however, the *Warren* was left, the whole force being under the orders of Commander Hull. The season of the year was still too early to carry ships into the Gulf of California, but preparations were now made to move the whole of the available force afloat, in that direction as soon as it would be prudent to do so. The *Congress* was kept cruising at the southward, and indeed most of the active vessels were moving up and down the coast, looking out for privateers, and rendering such services as were in their power. Toward the close of September, Captain Lavalette went into the Gulf with his own ship and the *Portsmouth*, and on the 16th of October the *Independence* sailed in company with the *Cyane* to join him off Cape San Lucas. This junction was made on the 29th, when Captain Lavalette reported the result of his successful attempt made on the town of Guaymas, nearly at the head of the Gulf. The place had a considerable force, and works of respectable extent, but Captain Lavalette took his frigate, and the sloop of war within fair range of the enemy's guns, planting two pieces of heavy artillery also, on a couple of islands that were favorably situated for such a purpose. After a cannonading of three quarters of an hour, which commenced at sunrise the next morning, a white flag was hoisted from the shore. It appeared that the enemy had evacuated the place, which indeed was now abandoned by all of the inhabitants. After some negotiation, Captain Lavalette caused all the batteries on the water-front of the town to be blown up. On the evening of the same day, it being reported by the officer in command on shore, that General Campujano was marching upon the place with a very considerable force, including artillery and lancers, parties were thrown on shore in readiness to meet him; the enemy, however, abandoned his intention of attack, ascertaining now that the troops of Campujano, some three or four hundred regulars with the same number of militia and Indians, were rapidly deserting and disbanding themselves. Captain Lavalette now left Commander Montgomery in the *Portsmouth* to look out for the port of Guaymas, and ran over to Loreto to meet the *Dale*, which vessel he expected to find at that place, on his way to join Commodore Shubrick off San Lucas.

[This is the conclusion of the portion dictated by Mr. Cooper.]

Before proceeding in the regular order of time, it here becomes necessary to go back to the year 1846, in order to notice some actions in which the sloop of war *Cyane*, Commander Du Pont, was creditably concerned. This vessel, having in the month of July landed the detachment of Major Fremont at San Diego, remained for a time on the coast

of California, when she was sent down on blockading duty to the main coast of Mexico. She arrived at San Blas on the 2d of September. Here a party was sent on shore under the command of Lieut. Rowan, which spiked all the guns that could be found at the place, amounting to twenty-four in all, and varying in calibre from twelves to thirty-twos. They were not all, however, in a serviceable condition.

It was not the policy of the commander-in-chief at this time to take permanent possession of any points on this distant part of the coast, as the force under his orders was insufficient for such a purpose, at least while Upper California required such constant attention. The duty of the ships was therefore confined to watching the ports, and enforcing the blockade as efficiently as possible. More active employment was occasionally found, in hindering the military preparations of the Mexicans, and in destroying such means of defence, as it was within the reach and capacity of a small naval force successfully to attack. The *Cyane*, therefore, kept to the northward, touching at Mazatlan, where the *Warren* was engaged in blockading, thence running into the Gulf of California, making the ports of La Paz and Mulejé. From the latter place it was found that a Mexican gun-boat had lately sailed, going, it was supposed, across to Guaymas. Thither the *Cyane* followed, and anchored in the inner harbor on the 6th of October. A battalion of troops of the line, with field artillery, was posted in the town, and, in connection with the national guard, formed a body of five hundred soldiers. Commander Du Pont immediately sent a communication to the Mexican commander, informing him of the declaration of a general blockade, and of the lenient terms which had been granted to other places, on condition of not taking an active part in hostilities, and demanding the surrender of the two gun-boats, which were lying in the harbor. A surrender of the gun-boats was refused, when the American commander sent a message, that he would be obliged to take them by force. From most commendable motives of humanity, he expressed his desire not to be compelled to fire upon the town, yet he informed the Mexican commander that resistance would oblige him to retaliate in this manner. In the mean time, and before an attack could be made upon them, the Mexicans set fire to the gun-boats, and they were entirely consumed. A Mexican brig, however, was left unharmed, under the idea that she was in too strong a position to be in danger of being cut out. Being a lawful prize, and, if left, likely to be of service to the enemy in conveying military supplies, the American officer determined to cut her out. She was anchored in a cove, formed by a long projecting point of land. She was hauled close in toward the houses, within pistol shot of them, with two streets opening upon her, one of which led down from the barracks where the troops were posted. These barracks were situated behind a mound of earth; so that the Mexicans might with reason have supposed that the brig was too well protected to be liable to an attack. It would be necessary, should the brig be successfully carried, to tow her for some distance in front of this strong position, before she could bear away from it.

The *Cyane* was hauled in as close as possible to the town, for it was apparent, that, should the enemy be at all bold and active, the brig could be carried and brought out by the boats, only under a well-directed and

spirited fire from the ship. The party sent in was embarked in the launch and one of the cutters, and was under the command of Lieut. G. W. Harrison, with acting Lieut. Higgins, and Midshipmen Lewis and Crabb. They rowed steadily in, and succeeded in boarding the brig, and in cutting her chain cable; the ship, meanwhile, keeping up a heavy fire upon that part of the town where the troops were stationed. The brig being now in possession, and the Mexicans thus far offering no resistance, Commander Du Pont, wishing to do as little injury to the town as possible, ordered the firing to cease. Immediately on this the enemy rushed forth from his lurking places, and opened a sharp fire with artillery and musketry upon the brig and the boats. This compelled a reply; and the ship, brig and boats all poured in a fire upon the town, which forced the troops back to their cover. During this time the boats and the brig had so far changed their position that they now came within the range of the ship's fire. This made a cessation of the firing again necessary; and, as before, the courage of the Mexicans revived, and their troops once more rallied to the attack. A company of Indians also had made out to get round the cove, and took up a position from which they added a cross-fire to the severity of the main attack. Though involving considerable hazard to those in the brig and boats, the American commander was again obliged to use the guns of the ship. In this instance the shells especially were thrown with great rapidity and precision, and producing consternation by bursting, speedily silenced the fire from the shore. In the mean time the brig had been set fire to by the captors; yet she was brought out and towed into a cove near by, where she was entirely consumed. The coolness and gallantry of Lieut. Harrison and the officers and men with him, elicited high praise from the Commander of the Cyane.

Leaving the Gulf the Cyane ran down to Mazatlan, where she relieved the Warren, and was employed for some time in watching this port, the most important then on the entire western coast of North America. In consequence of the very close blockade which was maintained, the town was suffering somewhat from scarcity, and a traffic was attempted by means of small vessels running up the Gulf, in order to supply the place with flour. These vessels could keep near the shore, where from the nature of the coast a ship of war could not reach them. Landing their cargoes in the outer or old harbor, they could relieve the wants of the town. Large bodies of troops were also posted at Mazatlan, and with guns in battery, and with field artillery they could give efficient cover to the vessels as they ran well in along the coast. Such a traffic could only be broken up by attacks made in the boats of the ship; and much active and arduous service was performed by the officers and men in this manner. The parties in the boats succeeded on two occasions in cutting off four small vessels from the harbor, and forced them through the breakers on to the beach, where they were deserted. On the second occasion, as the ship's boats were returning from their work, four boats, two of them launches, and having on board sixty soldiers, put out from the harbor for the purpose of intercepting the men from the Cyane. The Cyane's boats on this occasion were her three smallest, and were under the command of Lieut. Harrison. The ship was not in a position to cover them. Notwithstanding the odds they gallantly formed in line and bore down

upon the Mexicans. The encounter was sharp, the Mexicans for a time maintaining a vigorous fire; but they finally broke their order of battle, ran their boats on shore, and fled to the cover of the bushes. On both these occasions the Mexicans were aided by artillery on the shore, while the guns of the *Cyane* could render no assistance to her parties in the boats.

The *Cyane* was very efficient in making captures while occupied in blockade duty at various points. She took possession of twenty-three vessels of all kinds, brigs, brigantines, schooners and smaller craft, either Mexican, sailing under Mexican colors, or neutrals boldly running the blockade.

In November, 1847, the *Dale*, Commander Selfridge, was sent to Guaymas to relieve Commander Montgomery, in the *Portsmouth*; the latter vessel joining the main squadron.

The flag was now flying at La Paz, in the province of Lower California, protected by a detachment of one hundred and ten men of the regiment of New York volunteers, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Burton. In the month of November, it was also hoisted at San José, in the same province, while the flag-ship was off that place. This was done at the earnest request of friendly citizens, in order that they might be protected from the insurrectionists, who were now moving in that region. Lieut. Charles Heywood, with four passed midshipmen and twenty marines, was placed in command of this post. He was also furnished with a nine-pounder carronade, and some fire-arms to be loaned in an emergency to friendly Californians. He posted his force in an old mission-house, situated on the higher portion of the town.

On the 8th of November Com. Shubrick left San José and stood over to the coast of Mexico, with the *Independence*, the *Congress*, and the *Cyane*. His destination was Mazatlan, and his object was the capture of this important city and the diversion of its commercial revenues into the treasury of the United States.

Mazatlan contained at that time about eleven thousand inhabitants, and was occupied by Colonel Telles, with a force of from nine hundred to twelve hundred regular troops. It has been known to yield three millions of dollars revenue to the Mexican government in one year. It was within easy reach of reinforcements from states which had contributed no quota to the war, and it was known there that its occupation by the squadron was contemplated. The following description of the occupation is taken from the accounts of competent eye-witnesses:

"On the 10th of November, in the afternoon, the ships came in sight of the town. The position of each had been assigned and marked on a plan of the coast and harbor, furnished to the commanders. The wind, however, was moderate, and the commander-in-chief inquired if the ships could take their positions after dark, and being answered in the affirmative directed them to proceed. The *Congress* led off in fine style to that bend in the coast outside, known as the old harbor, where, the shore being low, she could command some of the avenues leading from the town, and effectually cover the landing, should the surf permit that point to be selected. It was a hazardous anchorage, but an important position, and boldly taken. The flag-ship stood for another slight bend in the

peninsula on which Mazatlan is situated, and where a break in the coast-range exposes to view from the westward, the most important part of the town, and which she brought to bear immediately under her guns.

"The Cyane kept on to get her station in the new harbor, her light draft enabling her to get sufficiently close to the bar for her eight-inch guns to reach the wharf, and cover the landing, should that point be selected. The Independence in her majestic might, just swinging round, showing her gun-deck tier of lights, and her stern almost in the rollers, presented a most imposing spectacle, a ship never having anchored there before. An English vessel of war was at anchor in the harbor, and the manner in which the ships took their positions, and invested the town, drew high encomiums from her commander and officers.

"Early on the morning of the 11th, Mazatlan was summoned to surrender, Captain Lavalette, the second in command, bearing the communication from Commodore Shubrick. Colonel Telles, the military commandant, tore the summons up, with insolent threats. On the return of Captain Lavalette orders were issued for an immediate landing. The height of the surf forbade the attempt to be made outside, and the usual place of landing inside of the harbor, was designated. The boats of the Independence, Congress, and Erie, which ship, under the command of Lieut. Watson, had anchored in the offing a day or two previous, were joined on entering the harbor by those of the Cyane, and this ship had her broadside sprung, to cover the landing, if necessary. The boats entered the harbor in three lines, commanded by the officers of the respective ships, the whole under the direction of the commander-in-chief in person. A division of the Congress, under Lieutenant John T. Livingston, had charge of the artillery, five pieces, captured in Upper California, and mounted on board that ship. The many points advantageous for defence which presented themselves, the heights near the landing, the streets, and the houses with terraces, warned the assailants that no precaution should be neglected. The men were on shore in a twinkling, and the companies formed, while the artillery was landing. The whole force, about six hundred strong, then marched through the town to the Cuartel, situated on a mound, overlooking the surrounding country, on the walls of which the American flag was hoisted, under a salute of twenty-one guns from the Independence.

"Colonel Telles, with his whole force, had retreated on the approach of the Americans. No laurels were reaped, no blood was shed, but the capture was important; it brought home to the Mexican that his commercial emporium in the west had shared the fate of the one in the east, while the American flag waved over the national palace in his capital. Prompt measures were taken for the defence and holding of Mazatlan, and for its municipal government. Captain Lavalette was made governor, and a garrison of seamen and marines established. A commission, consisting of Commander Du Pont, Lieutenant Chatard, Purser Price, and Mr. Thomas Miller, arranged with the municipal Junta the terms of occupation. The ships moved into the harbor; the custom-house was opened and organized, and a tariff of duties, modified to suit the trade of the coast, was established. Mr. H. W. Greene, purser of the Independence, appointed collectors, under whose judicious management, assisted by Mr.

Speeden, purser of the Congress, more than a quarter of a million of dollars of duties, was collected in five months."

The precise and judicious arrangements for the capture of this important point made by Com. Shubrick, reflect great credit upon the capacity of that officer, and the efficiency and steadiness with which these arrangements were carried out so successfully, are indicative of the good qualities of the respective commanders, and of the officers and men under their orders. There is no doubt that the skill and ability manifested in the disposition of the forces, in connection with the uniform success of the American arms over every portion of the wide field of this war, led the Mexican commander to withdraw a body of troops, which might have given serious trouble to the invaders, and might not have left them the satisfaction of a bloodless victory.

Commerce soon resumed its wonted activity, but trading with the interior was interfered with by the troops of Colonel Telles, who still occupied a position a few miles from the city. Several attempts were made to open the communication with the country, but no general action was risked. On the 20th of November, two parties, one on land, of ninety-four sailors under Lieut. Selden, and the other in boats, consisting of sixty-two men under Lieut. Rowan, were sent to disperse a body of the enemy posted about ten miles out. The attack was commenced at daylight, and was quite warmly resisted by the enemy; but it was soon completely successful, the Mexicans breaking in confusion before the impetuous charge of the seamen, and throwing away their arms in their flight. The Americans lost one man killed, and three officers and seventeen men wounded; the loss of the enemy being seven killed, and twenty-five or thirty wounded. These sorties drove the Mexicans further back, and left the roads more free. For some time a large garrison was maintained on shore, and until the close of the war, a strong naval force was at anchor in the bay. Strong redoubts were also constructed, and mounted on the land side of the town; so that had the enemy made an attempt to regain possession of it, with any force at his command, he would, without doubt, have been promptly repulsed. In consequence of the large force required at Mazatlan, and the necessity of sending reinforcements to Lower California, Com. Shubrick was unable to take possession of the other Mexican ports farther to the south, as had been contemplated in his original plan.

Events in the mean time occurring in Sonora and Lower California, recall our attention to those provinces. It has been stated that the Dale, Commander Selfridge, was ordered to Guaymas, province of Sonora, to retain possession of that port. On his way thither, this officer learned that insurrectionary movements were on foot at Mulejé, on the eastern coast of Lower California. Troops and munitions of war were carried from Mexico, across the gulf, to this place. When the Dale arrived there, it was found that the region was in possession of Mexican troops, to the number of one hundred and fifty or more, headed by a chief called Pineda. The broadside of the ship was sprung so as to command the shores of a creek, up which Lieut. Craven proceeded, with four boats and fifty men, to cut out a schooner. This was done without resistance, though large numbers of Mexicans were in sight. The next day, October 1st, the same officer, with the marines and fifty sailors, landed on the right

bank of the creek, and scoured the valley to the distance of nearly three miles. They were frequently assailed by the enemy in ambuscade, but they steadily advanced, driving the latter before them. At the same time, the battery of the ship kept up a fire of round shot and shell, which aided greatly in forcing the Mexicans back. They abandoned the village and retreated up the valley to a distance where, through fear of being led into an ambuscade, it was not thought prudent to follow them. The troops returned to the ship without the loss of a man, and with but two slightly wounded. We shall hear more of these Mexican forces hereafter. From this time for several months, Pineda was the active leader of a threatening insurrection in this province, which, without being successful against the American forces, inflicted great evils upon the peaceably disposed inhabitants. A small schooner was hired and placed under the command of Lieut. Craven, for the purpose of cruising in this part of the gulf, and preventing intercourse with the main shore of Mexico.

The Dale arrived at Guaymas on the 8th of November, and relieved the Portsmouth from the duty of guarding that port. The enemy's forces in this vicinity had now increased to a considerable amount, being probably not less than a thousand men. Commander Selfridge had not men enough to garrison the town, so that the flag was kept flying on an island under the guns of his ship. The enemy sought in large force to gain a lodgment in the town, but the shot and shell from the ship rendered this position not very tenable. On the 17th of November, Commander Selfridge, supposing that there were none of the enemy in the immediate neighborhood, landed at the head of a party of sixty-five marines and seamen. They had not proceeded far, when they were assailed with a volley of musketry from a house. A ball wounded Commander Selfridge severely in the foot, obliging him to relinquish the command to Lieut. Smith, and to return to the ship. The latter officer now found himself engaged with about three hundred of the enemy, who met him with a brisk fire and some good show of resistance. The fire of the little force of marines and seamen was, however, delivered with such rapidity and precision, that the enemy soon began to retreat precipitately. The fire from the ship was also opened, and began to be felt. The Mexicans were now in hopeless confusion, and evacuated the town in all possible haste; but the American detachment was not sufficient to follow them up with effect. In this creditable action the Americans suffered no injury, with the exception of the wound of the commander; while the loss of the enemy must have been not less than thirty killed and wounded.

This check to the Mexicans was serviceable, as it was quite important that this place should be held at all hazards.

It will now be in order to recur to the state of affairs in the province of Lower California. The Mexicans who had landed at Mulejé, and whom Commander Selfridge had so gallantly driven toward the interior, passed through the country, exciting hostility to the American rule, and drawing the disaffected to their ranks. The majority of the people were without doubt friendly to the provisional government, established by the military power of the United States, and but comparatively few joined the standard of revolt. On the 16th of November a body of Mexicans attacked the post established at La Paz. This post was held, and most

handsomely defended by Lieutenant-colonel Burton, with a detachment of the regiment of New York volunteers; but as this affair belongs properly to the history of army operations, it need not be described in this work.

On the 19th of November, a large body of the enemy came within a league of the post established at San José, which, it will be remembered, was occupied by Lieut. Heywood, with four officers and twenty marines. He had also organized and armed about twenty volunteers. The position occupied consisted of two houses — the one an old mission-house, which had to be somewhat strengthened and repaired to make it defensible, and the other a private house, so closely adjoining, that it was necessary to occupy it lest it might fall into the hands of the enemy. In the latter, Passed-midshipman McLanahan was stationed with twelve volunteers. At the mission, a nine-pounder was mounted, and loopholes left for musketry.

An advance guard approached on the morning of the 19th, and demanded a surrender, which, of course, was refused. The main body took up a position on an eminence about a quarter of a mile distant. It consisted of one hundred and fifty mounted men, and commenced the attack late in the day by a fire from a six-pounder. This ceased at dark, having done but little damage. About ten o'clock at night, the whole body of the enemy commenced an attack upon the front and rear of both houses. Their fire was vigorous, but was returned as vigorously by the little garrison. Their cannon was posted in front of the main building, where it was replied to by the nine-pounder. The defence was so effectual, that the enemy were glad to cover themselves behind the neighboring buildings, and thus the combat was continued throughout the night; and by morning, the enemy retired to their camp. The day passed quietly; but as night closed in, the Mexicans were again in motion. They now concluded to undertake the capture of the mission-house by assault. This was a bold plan to be formed against so determined a garrison as they had found this one to be. In executing this movement, a strong party rushed up toward the front of the house, with the intention of forcing their way in and capturing the gun. But a destructive discharge of musketry brought down their leader and several of their number, when they broke and fled. This repulse in front intimidated the party in the rear, who were approaching with ladders to scale the walls, and they were thus easily driven back. The next morning a whaling vessel came in sight and anchored off the town. The Mexicans probably took it for a ship of war, for the whole body soon moved off. They lost at least eight killed and more than that number wounded; while of the garrison but one was seriously, and two slightly wounded.

As soon as the report of these hostilities reached Com. Shubrick, he dispatched the store-ship *Southampton* to the aid of Lieut. Heywood. The *Portsmouth* followed as soon as possible, and the *Cyane* was also sent to La Paz, with aid and supplies to Lieut. Col. Burton.

On the 12th of January, 1848, San Blas, a seaport town, situated to the south of Mazatlan, was captured by a small force under the orders of Lieut. Comd't Bailey, who was maintaining the blockade of the port with the *Lexington* store-ship. The party landed under Lieut. Chatard, and brought off two pieces of artillery from the fort, and a fine boat belonging

to the custom-house. No opposition was met with; still it was not deemed advisable to hoist the flag, as sufficient force could not be left on shore to defend it.

Lieut. Chatard also landed a small party at Manzanillo, and spiked three large guns. Mexico now had not a single gun mounted on this entire coast, except at Acapulco.

In the province of Sonora, the enemy still continued to hover around Guaymas. A detachment having established itself at Cochori, on the coast about nine miles from Guaymas, Lieut. Yard, now commanding the *Dale*, determined to dislodge it. A party of seamen and marines was detailed from the ship for this purpose, and placed under the command of Lieut. Craven. Having proceeded for four miles in boats, they landed and cautiously advanced, seeking to surprise the enemy. In this they were successful, having nearly surrounded the house where they were posted, before being discovered. Some firing ensued, but the enemy soon yielded. A part escaped, as the attack was made in the night; but the commander and six soldiers were taken prisoners, and five were left dead upon the field. The assailing party suffered no loss.

In the early part of the year 1848, San José became again the centre of very active military operations. On the 22d of January, a small detachment of Lieut. Heywood's command, consisting of Passed-midshipmen Warley and Duncan, and six men, was captured on the beach by a large body of the enemy's cavalry. This was a serious loss to the little garrison. The Southampton, having furnished all possible aid to Lieut. Heywood, was sent to La Paz, with orders for the *Cyane* to take her place at San José. This was a very opportune change; but before it was fully effected, hostilities had recommenced around the devoted mission-house, though the *Cyane* arrived in time to take part in them. The enemy, despairing of carrying a post so well defended as La Paz, had concentrated his forces, amounting to three or four hundred men, around the feeble position held at San José. The defence of this position rested with a garrison of twenty-seven marines, ten effective seamen, and about twenty California volunteers. The town was deserted by its inhabitants, and about fifty women and children sought protection in the imperfect fort, and were supported from its scanty supplies.

In the latter part of January, the Mexicans appeared in force. On the 4th of February they drew their lines quite closely around the fort, and fired upon all who showed themselves. On the 6th a sortie was made by Lieut. Heywood with twenty-five men, which was successful in dislodging a strong party posted at the lower end of the street. On the 7th another bold and successful sortie was made, attended, however, with the loss of one man. Notwithstanding these sorties, the enemy gradually hemmed the garrison in more closely. Their former experience had taught them not to risk an assault, and their policy now seemed to be to reduce the garrison by a regular investment and siege. By the 10th they had complete possession of the town. They occupied a church and other commanding buildings within musket-shot, from which they kept up an almost incessant fire during the remainder of the siege. Thus protected, it was seldom that the besieged were able to find an opportunity to fire at them with effect. On the 11th the firing was continued with great vigor; and

during this day the garrison suffered the loss of Passed-midshipman McLanahan, who was wounded in the neck, and survived but two hours.

The morning of the 12th revealed a new source of annoyance. The enemy had erected a breastwork, from which they commanded the watering place of the garrison. But nothing daunted, the men went vigorously to work to dig for water within the post, and this against great difficulties, as they could not blast the rock through fear of drawing the fire of the enemy. On the 14th, the supply of water was running low, and still a continual fire was poured in upon the heroic band. But on this day relief came. In the afternoon the *Cyane* hove in sight, and soon came up and dropped her anchor off the town. The interest of the fight now turned in this direction. Commander Du Pont of the *Cyane*, knowing that the Mexicans were in large force, and wisely judging that they must have full possession of the space between the beach and the mission-house, deemed it too hazardous to attempt relieving his beleaguered comrades by night, unless in an emergency. To those on board the ship the night attack was unknown, as the report of small-arms could not reach that distance, and Lieut. Heywood refrained from using artillery, lest he should alarm his friends, and so induce them to land at night.

But when the day dawned the boats of the *Cyane* were seen moving toward the shore. They contained one hundred and two officers and men, headed by Commander Du Pont. The enemy soon showed himself in full force in front, after the landing was effected, and the contest commenced. As the Mexicans possessed the advantage of the covers along the road, they were able to keep up an annoying flank and rear fire upon the advancing Americans. Still the latter moved steadily on, driving their opponents back at every point, or giving them volleys of musketry to the right and left as occasion required. The Mexicans engaged with great vigor, and continued their fire throughout with steadiness; and it would also have been quite destructive had they not generally fired too high. Step by step the ground was gained and progress achieved, as the compact little column pushed on with unconquerable bravery. It required the best exertions of the officers to restrain the impetuosity of the seamen, who were eager to come to closer quarters—a movement which would soon have lost them the advantages gained by their unity and steadiness of action.

The progress of the battle could be seen quite plainly from both the ship and the fort, and, with reason, excited great interest among the observers at both these points. Those in the ship were unable to render any assistance by means of their long guns, as it was impossible to separate friend from foe. But the garrison could not curb their impatience, and soon sallied out to form a junction with their companions. A party of the enemy was still firing upon the fort, but the charge, led by Lieutenant Heywood, drove them from the street they occupied, and opened the way for the union of the two detachments. Just before this union was effected, the enemy made a final stand and sought by great exertions to maintain his ground. But it was all in vain, and the shout of victory was raised just as Lieut. Heywood joined the party of his welcome friends. It surely borders on the miraculous that this march was made under such a fire, and this victory gained by the Americans over treble their own number,

without the loss of a single life, and with only four slightly wounded. The loss of the enemy could not be ascertained with any exactness, but there were at least thirteen killed. They also lost in their long attack upon the post, at least fifteen killed, and many wounded. The casualties to Lieut. Heywood's command were three killed and four slightly wounded. The coolness, perseverance, and indomitable resolution displayed in this long defence against such superior numbers, cannot but draw upon the actors especial notice and renown, and place it among the many memorable achievements of this war.*

The organization of the insurrection was nearly broken up after this repulse. Though the chief, Pineda, with a considerable force, still remained in the vicinity, the presence of a ship of war operated as an effectual check upon any further attack. In the month of March, indeed, the Americans assumed the offensive, and by several sudden attacks, with comparatively small parties, drove the enemy further and further up the country. On the night of the 15th of this month, a detachment from the garrison at La Paz, under the command of Captain Steele of the New York regiment, made a forced march and came unexpectedly upon the enemy's camp at San Antonio. The surprise was complete, and the conflict short; it ended in the discomfiture of the Mexicans, and the rescue of the Americans taken prisoners, as already mentioned, on the 22d of the preceding January.

Colonel Burton and Commander Du Pont kept up a system of short and rapid expeditions, in various directions, wherever an enemy showed himself; so that by the close of April the forces of the Mexicans were wholly dispersed, their principal chiefs taken prisoners, and the province of Lower California rendered completely tranquil. On the 20th of April, a detachment of one hundred men from the volunteer regiment in Upper California arrived at San José, and Lieut. Heywood and his command returned to their proper quarters on shipboard.

At Guaymas, where the Dale still remained, the officers and men were constantly occupied in maintaining the blockade, and in watching a large extent of coast in order to prevent the sending of military supplies or assistance across to Lower California. Their vigilance and occasional skirmishes kept the enemy at a distance, and reduced him to defensive operations.

On the receipt of the information of a provisional suspension of hostilities on the part of the main army in Mexico, Commodore Shubrick entered into a similar arrangement, and withdrew the garrison from Mazatlan, leaving a few men to guard the works until the establishment of a definitive treaty of peace. Until the close of the war, therefore, the duty of the naval force was confined to the maintenance of the positions already held. In July, 1848, Commodore Shubrick sailed for home with the Independence, by way of the Sandwich Islands, having been relieved in his command of the Pacific squadron by Com. Thos. Ap C. Jones, in the Ohio 74.

* While these pages are going to press, information has been received of the death of the gallant Heywood. He fell a victim to the yellow fever, contracted at Rio Janeiro, and died on board the steam-frigate Saranac, of which he was second in command.

CHAPTER VI.

Com. Conner on the east coast of Mexico—Blockade—Expedition against Tobasco and Alvarado—Plan of attack on Vera Cruz—Minor towns taken—Loss of the Somers—Landing of the American army—Com. Perry relieves Com. Conner—Bombardment of Vera Cruz—Capture of Alvarado, Tuspan and Tobasco, and occupation of Mexican ports—Skirmishes—Services of marine corps—Gen. Quitman—Death of Major Twiggs.

For the preservation of a more clear and convenient method, we have followed the naval operations on the west coast of Mexico from the commencement to the close of hostilities. In the same order we will now present an account of the services of this arm of the national power, in the Gulf and on the east coast of Mexico.

The navy found no enemy to contend with on its own element in this quarter; and was, therefore, principally occupied as an auxiliary to the army. Though its services were not brilliant, they were certainly indispensable.

In July, 1845, the Secretary of the Navy wrote to Commodore Conner, commanding the home or Gulf squadron, that he must now consider Texas as a part of his country, to be defended as any other portion should be, and must hold his force in readiness for any contingency. The vessels of war embraced in his command at this time were, the frigate Potomac 44; sloops of war Falmouth 20, Saratoga 20, St. Mary's 20; brigs Somers 10, and Lawrence 10. The steamers Mississippi 10, and Princeton 9, sloop of war John Adams 20, and the brig Porpoise 10, were ordered to join his squadron without delay.

During the movement of General Taylor's division to Corpus Christi, and thence on to the north of the Rio Grande, the smaller vessels of the squadron kept it company, and rendered some valuable services. When hostilities actually commenced, and the state of war was declared to exist, instructions were issued to Com. Conner to employ his command in the blockade of Mexican ports, so far as its force would admit of doing so effectually. The government required that the blockade should be actual and absolute, except against the vessels of war of neutral nations. These orders were issued on the 13th of May, 1846; and that they might be properly carried out, several additional vessels were attached to the squadron of Com. Conner. These were the frigate Cumberland 44, frigate Raritan 44; and the brigs Perry and Truxton of 10 guns each. The sloop of war Albany 20, also joined during the year.

On the 8th of May the firing of the artillery at the battle of Palo Alto was heard at Point Isabel, where the squadron lay. Major Munroe, commanding the post, and having under his care the supplies for the army, apprehensive of an attack by the enemy upon so important a point, requested of Commodore Conner a reinforcement to his troops from the squadron. This was promptly granted; and five hundred seamen and

marines, under Captain Gregory, of the Raritan, were landed and assigned their post behind the defences. But the victories of the 8th and 9th drove the Mexicans across the river, opened the communication between Fort Brown and Point Isabel, and left the latter free from all danger.

On the 18th of May a detachment of nearly two hundred marines and seamen, from the Cumberland and Potomac, under the orders of Captain Aulick, sailed up the Rio Grande in the boats of the ships, and effected a junction with a detachment of the army at Barita, on the right bank of the river, and about fifteen miles from its mouth. At this point they established a post without any opposition, and on the same day the army under General Taylor crossed the river and entered Matamoras.

The vessels were now dispatched to their several stations to enforce the blockade of the ports of Mexico on the Gulf as far south as Alvarado. The changes of the ships on the several stations were necessarily frequent, as, for a time, they were obliged to repair successively to Pensacola to replenish their supplies. The Somers was sent to Yucatan, in order to ascertain what course that government intended to pursue in the war between the United States and Mexico. The honest neutrality of this province would require a less extent of coast to be guarded, and diminish the resources of Mexico for a prolonged contest. Munitions of war were introduced through this province into Mexico, so that the necessary neutrality was not maintained. It became advisable, therefore, in the autumn of this year, to send an expedition against Tobasco, through which city this commerce in the materials of war was carried on. The place is situated on the river of the same name, about seventy-four miles from its mouth, and in a south-easterly direction from Vera Cruz. Its seaport called Frontera, is situated at the mouth of the river.

Commodore Matthew C. Perry was appointed to conduct this expedition. As the harbors of Mexico were inaccessible to most of the ships of war, in consequence of sand bars formed across their entrances, several small steamers and schooners had been purchased and sent to the scene of operations in the Gulf. Of these, Com. Perry took the steamer Vixen, and the schooners Bonita, Reefer, and Nonata, besides the steamer McLane and the schooner Forward of the revenue service, as the most available species of force with which to ascend the river. His own ship was the Mississippi, steamer, on board of which was a detachment of two hundred officers, seamen and marines, under command of Captain Forrest of the Cumberland.

The expedition sailed on the 16th of October, and arrived off the mouth of the Tobasco on the 23d. The Mississippi was left at the anchorage outside, while Com. Perry himself went on board of the Vixen. This small steamer then took in tow the Bonita and Forward, with the barges containing the detachment under Captain Forrest, and crossing the bar began to ascend the river. The Nonata followed under sail; the Reefer, having parted company in a gale, had not yet rejoined.

The town of Frontera was taken possession of without resistance, with several vessels in port, and two steamers which were firing up, in the hope of escaping up stream. The largest of these steamers, the Petrita, was immediately taken into service; the detachment of Captain Forrest embarking in her, and the Nonata and Forward, with the barges, being

attached to her in order to be towed up the river. The Vixen then took the Bonita in tow, and the next morning the command again moved forward, in order to reach Tobasco before additions could be made to its defences. The rapidity of the current and an imperfect knowledge of the channel of the river made their progress slow. The next morning they came abreast of a fort, which commanded the river at a very difficult point, and from which they looked for opposition to their advance; but they passed it unmolested, the men in charge fleeing at their approach. At noon Tobasco was reached. Several merchant-vessels were secured by the boats, and the squadron anchored in order of battle abreast of the town, within half-musket range.

Captain Forrest went directly on shore, with a flag, and a summons to the governor to surrender. This was answered with bravado, and an invitation sent back to the commander to fire as soon as he pleased. Com. Perry was extremely reluctant to destroy the town and to subject the inhabitants to the miseries of a bombardment, merely to gratify the inhuman pride of a man, who, safe himself, would not surrender, though incapable of making any effectual resistance. It was necessary, however, to make some demonstration of his power, and he consequently directed the firing to commence from the guns of the Vixen alone, and these to be aimed at the flag-staff. At the third discharge the flag came down. Captain Forrest was now sent ashore again to inquire if they surrendered; but he was informed that the flag was not struck, but only shot away.

Captain Forrest now landed with his detachment at a point where they were under cover of the guns of the vessels. This movement drew from the enemy a fire of musketry, which was returned by the flotilla, and continued till evening. Not considering it safe for the land party to remain on shore through the night, Com. Perry recalled them. The crews were continued at quarters throughout the night, but the firing from the flotilla was not resumed. Com. Perry, knowing that the governor disregarded the wishes of the principal citizens in refusing to capitulate, now determined, from motives of humanity, to relinquish any plan of a more complete conquest, and retire from the place, satisfied with having broken up the obnoxious traffic in munitions of war. But in the morning the firing was recommenced from the town, and consequently it became necessary to reply to it from the flotilla. A flag of truce now appeared, which was met by Captain Forrest, and through him conveyed to the Commodore a communication from the principal foreign merchants of the place, setting forth the facts that they were great sufferers by the bombardment, and that they would be ruined if it continued, and desiring the American commander to spare the town and avert such disastrous results. Com. Perry in his reply expressed his continued determination, formed the evening before, not to fire unless fired upon from the shore. He, therefore, ordered his prizes to move down the river, while the armed vessels prepared to follow. But one of the prizes grounded near the shore, when a large party of Mexicans collected in the houses and streets opposite to it and began to pour into it a very severe fire. This of course made it necessary to attack the town again, in order to relieve the prize. The fire of the vessels soon silenced that on shore, and Lieut. Parker, in charge of the prize, defended himself with great gallantry, and succeeded in getting his

vessel off, with one man killed and two wounded. Lieut. Charles W. Morris, while conveying an order in a boat from the Commodore to Lieut. Parker, received a severe wound in the neck, which a few days after resulted in his death. The flotilla, with the prizes, now withdrew from before the town, and proceeded down the river. Such vessels found in the river as were of little value were burned, and the rest of the prizes were sent to the main squadron near Vera Cruz. The McLane and the Forward, revenue cutters, were left to maintain the blockade of the river, and Com. Perry and command rejoined Com. Conner.

Previous to this successful expedition against Tobasco, some naval movements were made which did not have so satisfactory a termination. In August Com. Conner planned an expedition against Alvarado, the first town of any importance on the coast to the eastward of Vera Cruz. But it failed in consequence of none of the vessels being able to cross the bar—the small steamers and schooners which ultimately proved so efficient in operations of this kind, not having been sent out at that time. When they arrived, in October, Com. Conner made another attempt to take possession of Alvarado. The defences of the place were by no means insignificant, consisting of several forts and batteries commanding the harbor and the entrance. The steamer Vixen towed in the two schooners Bonita and Reefer, and this division was able to return the fire of the batteries. The steamer Mississippi was also enabled to reach a position where she did considerable execution with her long guns. But the steamer McLane touched on the bar, and so was unable to bring the second division, consisting of the Nonata, Petrel and Forward, into action. This misfortune frustrated the plan; as the first division not being properly supported, it became necessary to recall it.

An attempt to capture Tuspan, situated on the coast, above Vera Cruz, resulted in the loss of one of the vessels of the squadron. On the 15th of August, Commander Carpenter stood in for the town with the brig Truxton. She struck upon the bar and obstinately resisted all efforts to get her off. Her officers and men, with the exception of Lieut. Hunter and a boat's crew, were obliged to surrender to the Mexicans. They were, however, subsequently exchanged.

In the autumn of this year a plan of a campaign was marked out, which contemplated the reduction of the city of Vera Cruz and its famous castle, and thence the march of a large army by the shortest route to the capital of Mexico. It was highly advisable to conceal this plan from the Mexican government. In order, therefore, to divert attention from the real point of attack, and to afford a convenient place for concentrating troops, orders were sent in October to Com. Conner to take possession of Tampico. The Raritan, Potomac, and St. Mary's were ordered to rendezvous off that port. On the 12th of November the steamer Mississippi, having on board a detachment of one hundred marines and seamen from the Cumberland, and towing the Vixen, Nonata, Bonita and Reefer, and the steamer Princeton, having in tow the Spitfire and Petrel, left the anchorage of Anton Lizardo. Arrived off the bar of Tampico, on the morning of the 14th, three hundred men were placed in the boats of the various vessels, which, in connection with the schooners above mentioned in tow of the steamers Spitfire and Vixen, were carried safely over the bar, and passed

up the river. The defences of the city had been abandoned, so that no resistance was met with. Before reaching it, a deputation of the government came on board, with whom the terms of a peaceable surrender were arranged. Two merchant vessels and three gun-boats were captured in the harbor. A strict blockade of the port was still maintained after its capture; and it was also garrisoned for some time by a strong detachment of troops.

From Tampico an expedition was sent under Commander Tattall, with the steamer Spitfire and the schooner Petrel, to Panuco, situated about eighty miles up a river of the same name, for the purpose of destroying some cannon and other munitions of war, which the Mexicans had transported from Tampico before its capture. Though the river banks afforded many points from which artillery might have swept the decks of the vessels, the enemy offered no opposition, and on the 19th of November, the town was taken possession of, and the military stores destroyed or brought away. In the latter part of November, the frigate Cumberland was sent home for repairs, Captain Forrest being transferred with his crew to the Raritan, and Captain Gregory and crew going home in the Cumberland.

While the squadron was off Tampico, the brig Somers maintained the blockade of Vera Cruz. The barque Creole, conveying munitions of war to the Mexicans, had violated the blockade, and lay on the night of the 20th of November in supposed security, under the guns of the fortress St. Juan d'Ulloa. In the darkness, a boat from the Somers quietly approached her, containing Lieut. Parker, Passed-midshipmen Rogers and Hynson, and five seamen. The guard was surprised, captured, and afterward set on shore, while the vessel was set fire to and burned. The adventurous and gallant party escaped without injury.

On the 5th of December, Passed-midshipman Rogers, and Dr. Wright, attached to the Somers, with one of the crew, went on shore in the vicinity of Vera Cruz for the purpose of a *reconnoissance*. They were soon surprised by a party of Mexicans; and Dr. Wright managed to escape, but the other two were taken prisoners. Though Midshipman Rogers wore his uniform, and could only be properly deemed a prisoner of war, his fate was for a long time doubtful, the Mexican authorities seeking to convict him as a spy. He endured great hardships, and was finally taken to the city of Mexico, whence he escaped before the city was captured by the American arms, joined the army of Gen. Scott, and served with distinction in the brilliant battles which closed the war. His misfortune in being captured, however, probably saved him from the more melancholy fate of most of his companions on board the Somers. This active little cruiser, on the 8th of December, while seeking under a press of canvas to cut off a vessel which was making for the harbor of Vera Cruz, was struck by a "norther" and thrown on her beam-ends. She soon went down, carrying with her, Acting-master Clemson, Passed-midshipman Hynson and nearly one half her crew of eighty men. The John Adams, just coming down the coast, went to the assistance of the brig, as also did the boats of the British, French, and Spanish ships of war, anchored near; by these some of the officers and men were rescued, while others reached the shore and were taken prisoners. Gold and silver medals were subsequently presented, by order of Congress, to the officers and men of the

foreign vessels who so nobly and generously risked their own lives in saving some of their fellow-men from the wreck of the unfortunate Somers.

Commodore Perry, with the Mississippi, Vixen, Bonita and Petrel, arrived off the town of Laguna, in the province of Yucatan, on the 20th of December. Leaving the Mississippi off the bar, he took the schooners and barges in tow of the Vixen, and proceeded up to the town. Possession was taken without any difficulty, and the military stores seized. Two forts were occupied, the American flag hoisted upon them, and the guns and carriages destroyed. Commander Sands, with the Vixen and Petrel, was left in charge of the place. On returning along the coast, Lieut. Comd't Benham, in the Bonita, was left at Tobasco river, to assume the command of the blockading vessels at that point.

The year 1847 commenced with very extensive and active preparations for the contemplated attack on Vera Cruz and the castle of St. Juan d'Ulloa. The descent of so large a body of troops as was necessary for the grand plan of the campaign, upon an open coast, with the needful but heavy encumbrance of its military supplies, could be no light work; and the aid of the navy was in all aspects of the undertaking indispensable. Great activity consequently pervaded this department of the national government. Bomb-ketches and steamers were purchased, equipped and sent to the Gulf. The Ohio 74, which was preparing for the Pacific, and the sloops Germantown 20, Saratoga 20, and Decatur 16, were rapidly fitted out and ordered to join the squadron. On the coast of Mexico was soon assembled, around Vera Cruz as a centre, or scattered off different ports on blockading duty, probably the largest force ever under the command of a single American naval officer.

The transports, conveying troops and supplies, were directed to rendezvous at the island of Lobos, which lies about twelve miles off the coast, some sixty miles below Tampico. At this point, many of them assembled during the month of February, and as the season was advancing, though many very necessary supplies had not yet arrived, the commander-in-chief decided to effect an immediate landing.

The following detailed account of the debarkation of the army of Major-general Scott, is from the pen of William G. Temple, Passed-midshipman in the navy, who, in view of the nautical interest attached to the movement, has compiled from original sources, a memoir of the operation, addressed to the Secretary of the Navy and placed among the files of his department. The substance of this document is here given.

"In view of landing the army at some point near Vera Cruz, surf-boats suitable for that service were contracted for in the different ports of the United States, by the quarter-master's department of the army. These boats were built with both ends alike, so as to steer with an oar at each end, and to stow in nests of three each, the largest one measuring forty feet in length. One hundred and forty-one boats, or forty-seven nests were contracted for and built; out of this number, however, only sixty-five had reached head-quarters by the time they were required for the landing of the troops.

"The army sailed from the rendezvous at Lobos Island on the 5th of March. In anticipation of the arrival of the transports off Vera Cruz,

the frigate Potomac and the sloops of war Albany and John Adams were stationed in the vicinity of Isla Verde, (some five miles to seaward of the city,) with orders to put an officer on board each vessel as she arrived, to pilot her into the anchorage at Anton Lizardo; or should the number of officers prove inadequate to this duty, to furnish the masters of the transports with such sailing directions as would enable them to pass inside of the Blanquilla Reefs to the anchorage.

"The naval squadron, under the command of Commodore Conner, and the transports having on board the troops and their equipments, under the command of Major-general Scott, were thus concentrated at the anchorage between the island of Salmadina and Point Anton Lizardo: a distance of some ten or twelve miles to the eastward of Vera Cruz.

"As fast as those transports having on board any of the surf-boats arrived, the boats were launched under the direction of a lieutenant of the squadron, their equipment inspected, and every thing belonging to them fully prepared for service; after which they were hauled up on the landward side of the island, and arranged and numbered by divisions; each division consisting of ten boats, taken from all the different sizes.

"In the mean time a speedy debarkation was resolved upon; it being important that a landing should be effected before 'a norther' should come on, as that would delay the operation several days. Accordingly, the General-in-chief and the Commodore of the squadron made a joint *reconnoissance* in the steamer Petrita, with a view of selecting the most advantageous point for that purpose. The choice lay principally between Point Anton Lizardo, opposite which the squadron and transports lay anchored, and the beach directly abreast the island of Sacrificios. The great objection to the first of these two, was the distance (about fifteen miles) that the troops would have to march before reaching the point of attack; while, at the same time, the road led through deep, loose sand, and involved the passage of one or two considerable streams. As to the mere landing, however, it was deemed quite as good as that near Sacrificios. The selection of this last-named point, obviated the difficulty already mentioned, being within two and a half miles of the city walls, although it had its own disadvantages. The exceedingly confined space afforded here for a secure anchorage, rendered it dangerous, in the then season of 'northers,' to bring up many of the transports. It was therefore suggested to transfer all the troops from the transports to the men-of-war and steamers, and after their debarkation, to order up from Anton Lizardo such transports with provisions and stores, as might first be required; which, in turn, might make room for others, till all should be landed.*

"In view of all these considerations, the beach near Sacrificios was deemed the most eligible point, and the debarkation was appointed to take place on the 8th of March. General orders were therefore issued on the 7th, by the Commodore, and the Commanding General, prescribing the necessary arrangements.

* Subsequent to the landing, however, the transports were ordered to Sacrificios in too great numbers; and a gale of wind coming on from the north, about forty vessels were blown upon the beach.

"The surf-boats were apportioned for use among the men-of-war as follows:

Frigate Raritan,	15.
Frigate Potomac,	20.
Sloop of war Albany,	10.
Sloop of war St. Marys,	10.
Steamer Princeton,	10.

"These vessels were directed to furnish to each boat, so apportioned to them, a crew of seven seamen, and a junior or petty officer to command it. Each division of ten boats was commanded by a lieutenant, and in some instances, was divided between two of that grade; the general direction of the whole remaining always with the senior. Captain Forrest, commanding the frigate Raritan, was ordered to superintend the whole operation.

"The officers detailed for this duty were sent on shore the day previous to the debarkation, and the boats allotted to their respective ships pointed out to them as they lay ranged and numbered on the beach, so as to avoid confusion and an indiscriminate seizure of the boats, when they should come with their crews at daylight to launch them. The boats' anchors were stowed in the sterns of the boats with their hawsers coiled clear for running; and the cockswains were instructed, in case the landing should be effected in a heavy surf, to drop the anchor from the stern outside the breakers, and to pay out the hawser as the boat went in, so that after the troops should have jumped out in shoal water, the boat could be warped out again through the breakers, without having received any injury from thumping on the beach.*

"The troops were ordered to be in readiness for the following distribution among the different men-of-war and steamers, to take passage from Anton Lizardo to Sacrificios.

"The 1st line under Brevet Brigadier-general Worth, consisting of the 1st brigade of regulars and Captain Swift's company of sappers and miners, to be received on board the frigate Raritan and the steamers Princeton and Edith. The field batteries of Captain Taylor and Lieutenant Talcott (also attached to this line and to be landed with them) to be towed up, in their respective transports, by the steamers Massachusetts and Alabama.

"The 2d line, under Major-general Patterson, consisting of the 1st brigade of volunteers commanded by Brigadier-general Pillow, and the South Carolina regiment of volunteers† (all of the 2d brigade that had yet arrived out) to be received on board the frigate Potomac and the steamers Alabama and Virginia. The reserve, under Brigadier-general Twiggs, consisting of the 2d brigade of regulars, to be received on board the sloops of war Albany and St. Marys, the brig Porpoise, and the steamers Massachusetts, Eudora and Petrita.

* This precaution, however, proved unnecessary at the time of landing, from the smooth state of the water; but at a later period, while landing heavy articles in a surf, it was resorted to with great success.

† The South Carolina regiment, finding themselves crowded out of the vessels assigned to their transportation, asked and received permission from Captain Sands of the steamer Vixen, to take passage in his vessel.

"Every man of the army was directed to take in his haversack, bread and meat (cooked) for two days; and the vessels of war were ordered to supply the troops with water and provisions, while on board.

"A system of signals had been arranged beforehand, by the General-in-chief, by which the transports were to indicate the number of boats required by each one to take from them the troops they had on board. They were to hoist a flag at the fore for each boat required to receive the first line, and to haul them down as the boats arrived alongside; in like manner at the main for the second line, and at the mizzen for the reserve.

"All the preliminary arrangements were thus completed on the evening of the 7th, but the next morning there were indications of a "norther," and the movement was postponed. At sunrise on the morning of the 9th, the officers and men detailed for that duty, were sent from the men-of-war, to launch and man the surf-boats. Those divisions of boats manned by the Raritan and Princeton were assigned to the transfer of the first line; going for them whenever a transport had flags flying at the fore, and taking them to the vessels of war and steamers, according to the herein before mentioned distribution. In like manner those divisions manned by the Potomac were assigned to the transfer of the second line, and those by the Albany and St. Marys to the reserve.

"Each of the frigates received on board between twenty-five and twenty-eight hundred men, with their arms and accoutrements; the sloops received about nine hundred each, and the smaller vessels numbers in proportion.

"When all were transferred, the fifteen boats belonging to the Raritan were taken to the steamer Spitfire to be towed to Sacrificios; the steamer Vixen went alongside the Potomac and took in tow the twenty boats belonging to her; the Albany sent her ten to the steamer Eudora, the St. Marys' ten were sent to the steamer Petrita, and the Princeton took in tow her own ten. At the same time the vessels, so sending them, detailed two lieutenants and two midshipmen to remain on board the towing steamers, and look out for their boats, together with two seamen for each boat, who were to remain in them, and steer them during the tow.

"This part of the movement was completed very successfully about 10 o'clock A. M.; and a few moments thereafter, the squadron and such of the transports as had been selected for the purpose, got under way for Sacrificios: the General-in-chief on board the steamer Massachusetts, and the Commodore of the squadron in the frigate Raritan.

"The weather was very fine, with a fresh yet gentle breeze from the south-east and a perfectly smooth sea. The passage to Sacrificios occupied between two and three hours. Each vessel came in and anchored in the small space previously allotted to her, without the slightest disorder or confusion, the anchorage being still very much crowded notwithstanding the number of transports that had been left behind.

"The debarkation commenced on the instant. Each vessel reclaiming her surf-boats from the steamer that had towed them up, sent them to receive the first line. The Princeton was ordered to take a position abreast the landing-place, and as near the shore as possible; and the surf-boats were directed, after receiving their quota of soldiers, to rendezvous astern of her, and to form there in a double line-ahead, according to

regiments and companies, and in prescribed order of battle; the two head boats holding on to each quarter of the Princeton, other two holding on to them, and so on, with the regimental flag flying in the head boat of each regiment.

"In the mean time, while this work of transfer and arrangement was going on, the steamers Spitfire and Vixen, and the five gunboats Petrel, Bonita, Reefer, Falcon, and Tampico were ordered to anchor in a line parallel with and as close in to the beach as they could get, to cover the landing with their guns if necessary. These vessels were armed chiefly with 32 pounder shell guns, and were of such light draught (from five to eight feet) that they were enabled to take positions within good grape range of the shore.

"When all was prepared, the boats cast off from the Princeton, and from each other, squared away in line-abreast, and pulled in together to the beach, where the troops landed without the slightest opposition. The boats immediately returned to the vessels for the second line of the army, and afterward for the reserve; and without waiting to form again in order of battle, they continued to pour the troops upon the beach, in successive trips, as fast as they could come and go. At some places the loaded boats grounded on the bar, or false beach, some twenty yards from dry land; and the troops had to wade through waist-deep water to get ashore. This occurred in comparatively few instances, however; and aside from the inconvenience of these few wettings, not an accident of any kind occurred throughout the whole operations. No enemy appeared to dispute the ground; and General Worth had the satisfaction of forming his command upon the neighboring sand-hills just before sunset. The landing commenced about the middle of the afternoon, and before 10 o'clock that night upward of 10,000 men, with stores and provisions for several days, were safely deposited on the beach.

"The steamer New Orleans with the Louisiana regiment of volunteers, 800 strong, arrived at Anton Lizardo just as the squadron had been put in motion for Sacrificios. She joined them; and her troops, together with the marines of the squadron, (who formed a battalion, under the command of Captain Edson of the marine corps,) were landed with the others. Other troop ships came in subsequently; so that on the 24th of March the field return showed a total of 12,603 men.

"In the mean time, also, the transports were ordered up successively from Anton Lizardo; and whenever the weather would permit, the surf-boats (still manned and officered from the squadron) were constantly employed in landing artillery, horses, provisions, and stores.

"The perfect success of the entire operation is sufficiently evident from the foregoing, without further demonstration. It only remains, therefore, to add a few words from the report of the two commanding officers, expressive of their gratification. Commodore Conner says: 'The officers and men under my command vied with each other, on that occasion, in a zealous and energetic performance of their duty. I cannot but express to the Department, the great satisfaction I have derived from witnessing their efforts to contribute all in their power to the success of their more fortunate brethren of the army.'

"General Scott writes, that 'to Commodore Conner, and the officers

and sailors of his command, the army is indebted for great and unceasing assistance, promptly and cheerfully rendered. Their co-operation is the constant theme of our gratitude and admiration.'"

Pending the bombardment of Vera Cruz, Commodore Conner, who had now been in command of the Home squadron more than three years, and whose health had become seriously impaired, was relieved, on the 21st of March, by Commodore M. C. Perry, and returned home in the Princeton.

On the 22d of March, the investment of the city being completed and some of the batteries constructed, the Governor was called upon to surrender. This being declined, in the afternoon of the day the firing commenced from the trenches, and was returned both from the city and the castle. At the same time the two small steamers, the Spitfire and Vixen, and the five gun-boats, led by Commander J. Tattnall, took a position, near the shore, whence their heavy shot could reach the city. This position was gallantly maintained and their fire kept up with rapidity and steadiness until late in the evening. They were supplied with ammunition during the night, and on the morning of the 24th moved to a still nearer and more favorable position, whence the firing was resumed. It soon became apparent, however, that the flotilla was in a position inconsistent with its safety, and it was consequently recalled.

It being the earnest desire of the officers and men of the navy to take some active part in the siege, General Scott generously assigned them a place in the trenches. Three eight-inch Paixhan guns and three long 32 pounders were landed from the squadron; and after vast labor in dragging them through the sand, in which duty the sailors were aided by detachments from the army, they were mounted in battery under the superintendence of Commander A. S. Mackenzie. This battery was served by different detachments from the several vessels, composed of lieutenants and other officers with an adequate number of seamen, all under the command of a captain. Each detachment was on duty twenty-four hours. The battery opened its fire on the 24th under charge of Captain J. H. Aulick of the Potomac. As soon as discovered, it drew upon itself an exceedingly severe fire from the enemy's guns, which was returned deliberately and with marked effect for about four hours, when the supply of ammunition failed. The loss from this detachment was five seamen killed and one officer and four men wounded. The relief party arrived in the afternoon under the command of Captain Mayo of the Mississippi. The breastworks having been much shattered, the night was spent in repairing them. Early on the morning of the 25th, the fire of four of the Mexican batteries was concentrated upon this work. An active cannonade was continued in return until half-past two P. M., when the enemy's guns were silenced. Two other batteries then turned their fire upon the naval battery, and they also were soon rendered inefficient. During this day Midshipman T. B. Shubrick, while pointing a gun, was killed. One seaman was killed and three were slightly wounded. Captain Mayo was relieved at the close of the day by Captain S. L. Breese of the Albany. The cannonade of the day gave employment for the night in restoring the dilapidated defences. In the morning a storm so filled the air with dust that it was impossible to sight the guns, and soon an order

arrived from the Commander-in-chief that the firing need not be resumed, as negotiations for a surrender were in progress. During the siege, the naval battery threw one thousand Paixhan shells and eight hundred round shot into the enemy's walls and forts.

In the commission for the settlement of the terms of capitulation, Captain Aulick represented the navy; and, on the 29th of March, the combined forces of the army and navy took possession of the city and castle, while the American flag floated over both amid a grand salute from the squadron and the batteries.

Immediately after the surrender of Vera Cruz, a combined movement was made for the capture of Alvarado, which, after the two previously mentioned failures, was in this instance accomplished. General Quitman, with his brigade of volunteer troops, was directed to proceed by land, in order to cut off the retreat of the Mexicans, and especially to gain possession of the horses and mules of that region, upon which the army was depending for a forward movement. Commodore Perry directed Lieutenant Charles G. Hunter, commanding the steamer *Scourge*, to proceed in advance with that vessel and blockade the harbor, while he himself followed with the other vessels more slowly, so as to co-operate with General Quitman when he should arrive in the rear of the town. But Lieutenant Hunter, who reached the bar on the 30th of March, allowed himself to be tempted by his zeal into an immediate attack upon the fortifications at the mouth of the river, instead of obeying the letter of his orders and simply maintaining a blockade. The next day, after a renewal of the attack, the Mexicans withdrew from the batteries and from the town, when Lieutenant Hunter entered the river, captured four schooners, left a garrison to guard the place, and proceeded up to Tlacotalpam. This town surrendered without resistance. Thus was the apparent object of the expedition accomplished before the main force arrived; but the important purpose of drawing supplies for the army from this quarter was entirely defeated, as the Mexicans escaped with their animals before the land force could hem them in. Commodore Perry arrived on the 2d of April, but his too active subordinate had left nothing to be done in the way of conquest. Quiet possession was taken of the town, and of such public property as had not been destroyed when the enemy evacuated the place. Sixty cannon were found, thirty-five of which were shipped and the remainder destroyed. Lieutenant Hunter was immediately placed under arrest, and was afterward, by the sentence of a court-martial, dismissed from the squadron for disobedience of orders.

As soon as Alvarado was reduced, Commodore Perry turned his attention to a movement against Tuspan. It will be remembered that the brig-of-war *Truxton* was lost on the bar while engaged in an attempt to capture this place. Some of her guns were now mounted in the forts which defended the town; and it was rather a point of honor with the navy to retake them. This expedition received no aid from the army. The *Raritan*, with a detachment of one hundred and eighty officers and men from the *Potomac*, the *Albany*, *John Adams*, *Germantown*, and *Decatur*, and the bomb-vessels *Vesuvius*, *Etna*, and *Hecla*, were ordered to rendezvous at the Island of Lobos. Commodore Perry in the *Mississippi*, accompanied by the steamers *Spitfire*, *Vixen*, and *Scourge*, and the

gun-boats *Bonita*, *Petrel*, and *Reefer*, with a party of three hundred officers and men from the *Ohio*, sailed from *Sacrificios* on the 12th of April. Joining the vessels at *Lobos*, he arrived off the bar of *Tuspan* on the 17th, and made preparations for an attack the next day. The larger ships being anchored outside, the small steamers, the gun-boats, and about thirty barges crossed the bar without accident on the morning of the 18th. The whole force detached from the ships—forming the landing party and carried in the barges—amounted to 1,490 officers, seamen and marines, with four pieces of light artillery for land service. The whole was led by Commodore Perry on board the steamer *Spitfire*. The approach to the town was defended by two forts on the right and one on the left bank of the river, in very excellent positions to sweep any force coming up stream. General Cos of the Mexican army was in command and had under him a force of 650 troops. When the flotilla came within range of the enemy's guns, the barges sheered off to land the detachment which was to operate on shore, under command of Captain S. L. Breese, while the steamers and gun-boats moved up the river. The Mexicans made but a feeble defence. They fired from the forts and also with musketry along the borders of the river. But as the American force came up, they rapidly fell back, deserting the batteries before the land party could get near enough to storm them. The attack, therefore, proved entirely successful, and the capture was effected, with a loss to the Americans of only three seamen killed and five officers and six men wounded. The guns and a quantity of ordnance stores belonging to the *Truxton* were recovered.

The *Albany* and the *Reefer* were left to watch *Tuspan*. The *Hecla* was sent to blockade *Soto de la Marina*, the *Etna* to *Tobasco* river, the *Porpoise* and the *Vesuvius* to *Laguna*.

The plan of Commodore Perry was to occupy every point on the coast at which supplies could be sent into Mexico, and thus, by diminishing her capability of resistance, to aid so far as the navy could, the conquering progress of the army. In accordance with this plan, a large part of the squadron now cruised to the eastward as far as *Yucatan*, to complete the work of bringing under American authority the maritime towns. The policy of the United States was also now changed. As the entire coast was in our possession, and its towns either garrisoned or watched by a sufficient force, it was deemed advisable again to open the ports to the entrance of commerce, and to direct the revenues into our own treasury. The blockade was therefore raised; a naval force, however, was still necessary to maintain the new revenue system which was imposed.

During his cruise to the eastward, Commodore Perry touched at the *Goazacoalcos* river, where he found a fort mounting twelve guns, but deserted by its garrison. The fort was blown up and the guns destroyed. The *Stromboli*, bomb-vessel, was left to guard this point. He then proceeded to *Laguna*, in *Yucatan*. This port was opened, and Commander *Magruder* of the *Vesuvius* was appointed governor. The flag-ship *Mississippi* then returned along the coast and met the main squadron off the *Tobasco*. The port at the mouth of this river was also declared open, and Commander *Van Brunt* of the *Etna* was invested with authority as civil and military governor. The blockade of the *Goazacoalcos* was also raised, and similar authority conferred on Commander *Walker* of the

Stromboli. Commodore Perry also ascended the latter river and received the formal submission of several interior towns. He then returned to Vera Cruz.

Captain Mayo, who had been appointed the governor of Alvarado and its dependencies, was active in securing the submission of many towns in the interior. Most of them voluntarily acknowledged his authority and came peaceably under the new rule. In the instance of one military expedition for the purpose of reducing a refractory town, one officer and five men were wounded on the part of the Americans. Otherwise the extension of their authority over a considerable region was unattended with bloodshed.

In the vicinity of Tobasco, however, matters did not remain in so good a condition. With no immediate force to overawe them, the Mexicans began to collect in considerable numbers. They held possession of the town, and constructed fortifications of no small strength at commanding points along the river. These indications of insubordination and hostility had continued till it became no longer prudent to disregard them. Commodore Perry, therefore, planned another expedition against the enemy in this quarter.

He arrived, on the 13th of June, off the river, with the Mississippi, Raritan, Albany, John Adams, Decatur, Germantown, Stromboli, Vesuvius, and Washington, and the steamers Scorpion, Spitfire, Scourge, and Vixen; the Etna and Bonita being already within the bar at their station. A large force from the several ships was, as usual, organized and placed in the barges. It numbered in all, officers included, 1,173 strong, with seven pieces of artillery. Commodore Perry transferred his pennant to the steamer Scorpion, which, in connection with the other steamers, took the gun-boats and barges in tow, and commenced the ascent of the river on the 14th. No appearance of an enemy occurred until the following day, when about twelve miles below the town, the flotilla was fired upon by an armed force concealed in the chapparel on the left bank of the river. This fire was soon silenced by the guns and musketry of the vessels; and, night coming on, the flotilla lay here till morning. Some distance farther up, artificial obstructions were met with in the river, and opposite to them on the shore was a well constructed breastwork, from which a strong body of Mexicans commenced a fire. Fearing that the steamers might suffer an inconvenient delay before being able to pass the obstructions, Commodore Perry determined to land at this point, and force his way through to the city. The heavy guns of the flotilla raked the intrenchment of the enemy, and the landing was effected near it. In ten minutes the entire detachment was formed on the shore, with seven pieces of artillery, which were taken from the boats and dragged up a steep bank of twenty feet height, by the sheer strength of the men. Three more pieces were also landed from the bomb-vessels, and then with great enthusiasm and eagerness the column moved to the attack. Their progress was slow on account of the high grass and thick chapparel, through which they were obliged to march, at the same time dragging their artillery with them. The outposts of the enemy were quickly driven in, and their breastwork was deserted without coming to close quarters. The steamers also had now passed the obstructions and were able to co-operate with

the land party. They boldly sailed on, receiving and returning the fire from the enemy's intrenchments, as they passed by. About a mile farther up was a principal work of the Mexicans, situated on a commanding point and defended by three hundred regular and as many irregular troops. They, however, stood fire but a short time, when they fell back upon their remaining defences. These consisted of another breastwork, a mile and a half from the city—behind this about a quarter of a mile, a trench across the road, filled with trees, their branches sharpened and lapped—and a quarter of a mile still nearer the city, an extensive fortification commanding the river and the road, occupied by four hundred artillery and infantry. These works were successively carried with but a feeble resistance on the part of the enemy.

During this march of nine miles the heat was exceedingly oppressive, and several men sank down through exhaustion, especially among those who were attached to the field-pieces. The other casualties were the wounding of two officers and seven seamen. The Mexicans had at least fourteen hundred men in the action, of whom about thirty were killed. Commodore Perry's command entered Tobasco about four o'clock in the afternoon of the 16th. A large quantity of military stores was destroyed, the captured cannon were removed to the vessels, the powder magazine was blown up, and the entire fortifications in and near the city were demolished.

As the enemy still hovered around Tobasco, it was necessary to leave a strong force to keep them in check. Accordingly the Scorpion, Etna, Spitfire, and Scourge, containing four hundred and twenty officers and men, of whom one hundred and fifteen were marines, were directed to remain off the city under the orders of Commander A. Bigelow. On the night of the 25th of June, an attack was made by one hundred and fifty Mexicans on the guard stationed in the main square of the town; they were repulsed, and without loss to the Americans. On the same day a party of twenty seamen, while on shore, were attacked by seventy Mexicans, and one of the former was wounded, the enemy losing one killed and six wounded. Small parties of the enemy occupied the outskirts of the town, and it was therefore necessary that the detachments on shore should be continually on the alert. Lieutenant-commandant Porter was also directed to burn the ranchos in the neighborhood of the town, in which the Mexican troops sheltered themselves. These were destroyed, to the number of two hundred. At a village called Tamultay, about three miles distant, some five hundred Mexicans were collected, and from this point, as head-quarters, these annoying attacks were kept up. Commander Bigelow determined to dislodge them from this position, and so, if possible, disperse them. Accordingly, on the morning of the 30th of June, he marched at the head of two hundred and forty men, with two field-pieces, in the direction of the village. When still a quarter of a mile from it, his command was assailed by a fire of musketry from both sides of the road, where the Mexicans had posted themselves in ambush. The column remained firm and promptly returned the fire. The Mexicans still held their ground until the artillery was brought into action, when, after a few discharges, they broke and fled in confusion. The pursuit proved ineffectual, as the enemy were too well acquainted with

the avenues of escape to be overtaken. The Americans lost two men killed and five wounded; the loss on the other side could not be ascertained. Two steamers, which started up the river with the purpose of co-operating in the attack on the village, in consequence of grounding, through ignorance of the channel, did not reach their point of destination until the battle had been decided.

This action brought hostilities to a close in this quarter, and shortly after, the vessels were withdrawn and resumed their stations at the mouth of the river and at other points along the coast. Guerilla parties still disturbed the inhabitants in the vicinity of Alvarado and Frontera, but no serious encounters occurred.

The squadron by this time had been greatly reduced, it being no longer necessary to maintain on the coast service, so large a force as had been assembled previous to the capture of Vera Cruz. The Ohio, the several frigates, the brigs, and a part of the sloops, had been detached from the squadron. In August the vessels remaining under the orders of Commodore Perry, were the Mississippi, Germantown, Decatur, Saratoga, John Adams, five small steamers, four gun-boats, and four bomb-vessels.

In relating the services of the navy during the Mexican war, it should also be mentioned that a detachment of the marines of the squadron, under the orders of Lieutenant-colonel Watson of that corps, served with the army of General Scott. It joined the main army in the vicinity of the city of Mexico, and in time to take part in those celebrated actions which resulted in the capture of the national capital. It was attached to the division of Major-general Quitman, and was first brought into battle on the 13th of September, on the occasion of the storming of the strong fortress of Chapultepec and of the fortifications which covered the Belen gate of the city. At the base of the hill on which Chapultepec is situated, and on the left flank, were two batteries of considerable strength, protected also by some solid buildings and a wall fifteen feet high. It was at this point that General Quitman's division was to advance to the attack upon the Castle. The storming party was selected from the different volunteer corps of the division, including therefore a part of the marine corps, and was placed under the command of Major Levi Twiggs of the marines. A pioneer storming party of select men, with ladders, pickaxes and crow-bars, was led by Captain Reynolds, also of the marines. Associated with these, was also a storming party of regulars, detailed from General Twiggs' division, and under its own officers.

A heavy and prolonged cannonade had been maintained from various points upon the Castle and its outworks, in order to open the way for the contemplated assault. On the morning of the 13th, the concerted attack commenced with the different divisions of the army under the immediate directions of the Commander-in-chief. General Quitman's command advanced over difficult ground and with slight protection, under a heavy fire from the fortress, the batteries and the breastworks of the enemy, the storming parties leading the column. The battalion of marines was also posted in a prominent position, where it could support the storming parties. The severe fire of the enemy soon revealed its effects upon the advancing column. The brave and lamented Major Twiggs was killed on the first advance, at the head of his command. But there was no

halting. The storming party rushed on to its desperate duty with resistless force, and entered the Mexican works. It was closely and ably supported. The Mexicans stood their ground with unusual resolution and courage. The contest was now hand to hand — swords and bayonets were crossed and rifles were clubbed. But the valor and enthusiasm of the Americans still triumphed. These outworks were carried and the way to the fortress from this direction was opened. The troops did not pause on this threshold of their conquest, but pressed on and fought their way into Chapultepec by the side of their brethren, who had been equally successful at the other points of attack.

The marines still accompanied their division in its progress along the causeway toward the Belen gate, and participated in the long and bloody battle by which, finally, this avenue to the city was opened. On the morning of the 14th, the division of General Quitman entered the city, and was the first portion of the army which marched into the Grand Plaza. The palace, now deserted by the Mexican authorities, was overrun with the desperate characters of the population, bent on plunder. Lieutenant-colonel Watson, with his battalion of marines, was ordered to clear it of these intruders and protect it from spoliation; which duty he promptly and successfully performed. This corps lost in the actions detailed above, Major Twiggs and six men killed, two lieutenants and two sergeants wounded.

Lieutenant Semmes of the navy, who served as a volunteer aid in General Worth's staff, and Passed Midshipman Rogers who was employed in the same capacity in General Pillow's staff, received high commendations from their chiefs for their conduct in the several battles around the city of Mexico.

The conclusion of the war released the naval force from its monotonous duty of guarding the coast, and protecting the revenue interests. Since this epoch, now memorable in the annals of the country, the navy has been employed in no hostile operations, its power being occupied simply in the appropriate duties of a state of peace.

CHAPTER VII.

Lieutenant Lynch's expedition to the Dead Sea in 1848—Dangerous navigation of the River Jordan—Scientific results of the expedition—The Grinnell expedition in search of Sir John Franklin—Dangers of the ice—Severe cold and darkness—No tidings of the lost Mariners—Expeditions to Japan, China, River La Plata, and western coast of Africa—Condition and resources of the Navy in 1853.

THOUGH the navy is strictly a military organization, and its martial achievements constitute its essential renown, yet its incidental services to science, or to any of the arts that facilitate human intercourse and promote human improvement, are without doubt worthy to be chronicled in its history. In accordance with this idea of the historian's duty, a brief

account must be given of an expedition to explore the course of the river Jordan, and the shores of the Dead Sea, which was planned and executed by William F. Lynch, lieutenant in the navy of the United States.

An application for this purpose was made by Lieutenant Lynch in the early part of the year 1847, to the proper authorities at Washington. The privilege was granted in July, and he was directed to make his preparations at the expense of the Department. In October he was appointed to the command of the store-ship *Supply*, destined to the Mediterranean with naval stores for the squadron. Every thing necessary for so unusual an enterprise was carefully selected and placed on board of the *Supply*, which sailed from New York on the 26th of November. In February, 1848, she reached Smyrna, where Lieutenant Lynch left the ship, and proceeded to Constantinople, to obtain from the Sublime Porte the requisite authority to cross through Palestine with his party. This obtained, with orders to the governors of the region to afford him aid and protection, he returned to his ship, and on the 31st of March, was landed with his boats and party on the beach at Haifa, in the bay of Acre, on the coast of Syria.

The boats provided for the expedition were constructed on the principle of the life-boats of Mr. Francis, one being made of copper and the other of galvanized iron. They were fitted on trucks, and were drawn by camels across the country from Acre to Tiberias, on the western shore of the sea of Galilee. The party consisted of Lieutenant Lynch, Lieutenant Dale, Passed Midshipman Aulick — Mr. Bedlow and Mr. Anderson, volunteers — and eleven petty officers and seamen. They carried with them a large blunderbuss, and each officer and seaman was fully provided with small-arms. Supplies for the party were transported on camels, and a guard of mounted Arabs was also engaged. Thus the entire caravan consisted of twenty-three camels, about eighteen horses and some thirty men, and, as it wound through the secluded villages of Palestine, presented a novel and picturesque appearance.

At Tiberias, Lieutenant Lynch obtained a wooden boat, in which he embarked a part of his stores; but this was soon so much damaged in the difficult navigation of the Jordan, that it became entirely unserviceable. On the 10th of April, they left Tiberias and stretched down the lake. Besides the party in the boats, there was a party composed principally of Arabs, under the command of Lieutenant Dale, which kept company on the western shore of the river, in order to be at hand in assisting their companions in any emergency. Lieutenant Lynch occupied eight days in sailing from the lake to the Dead Sea. So sinuous is the course of the river, that it passes over about two hundred miles in accomplishing a direct distance of sixty. The navigation was found to be of the most exciting and hazardous character. No boats could have passed through the severe ordeal but the metallic ones so wisely provided. These, manned by their intrepid crews and guided by their skillful officers, shot down frightful cascades and plunged into boiling torrents, and though receiving some hard blows by coming in contact with the sunken rocks, they carried the adventurous navigators unharmed through every danger. At times it was necessary for the men to spring out, and, holding the boats by their sides to guide them by main strength down the rapid current.

Indeed the labors and exposures incident to such a voyage were

excessive, and cannot be detailed in this short account. The party was also fortunate in escaping any attacks from wandering Arabs, which from all representations they had been led to expect. The officers were respectively occupied in making observations relating to the topography, and the geological and botanical characteristics of the country through which they passed.

On the 18th of April, they entered the dreary and mysterious waste of waters so appropriately called the Dead Sea. Their first encampment was at Feshkah, on the western shore of the sea, about five miles from the mouth of the Jordan, where the land-party joined them, as they had previously done whenever it was practicable to meet. It was with great difficulty that the navigators reached this point, for they encountered a gale very soon after entering the sea, which, acting upon the ponderous water, made it almost impossible to work the boats toward the shore, and night settled down upon them in these gloomy circumstances. After severe toil they were able to reach their companions on shore. Amid the impressive and sublime scenery of this sea, Lieutenant Lynch and his party spent several weeks. They established a permanent encampment, and from this center made constant and extensive tours of exploration. Various lines of soundings were run, for the purpose of determining the depth of the water in different parts of the sea, and quite a careful observation was made of all the shores, particularly the western and southern. This expedition has certainly the honor of determining the course and characteristics of the Jordan, in modern times very imperfectly known, and of throwing much light upon the geography and physical peculiarities of the Dead Sea. It was well planned and equipped, and possessed that combination of means for the want of which most individual travelers in the same region had been hitherto unsuccessful, and some of them very unfortunate.

Much enthusiasm and energy were displayed by all concerned in this expedition, and though in some instances suffering occurred amid the contingencies of so strange and unknown a region, yet so admirably was every possible precaution taken and every arrangement carried out, that all the anticipated results were accomplished without serious accident to any of the number. Having finished the explorations, the boats were taken to pieces and placed upon the backs of camels, the encampment was broken up, and the party, gladly bidding farewell to the solemn and desolate scene, on the 10th of May commenced their journey to the Mediterranean by way of Jerusalem. A part, however, were detailed for the performance of a still remaining duty—the accurate determination of the actual depression of the Dead Sea beneath the level of the Mediterranean. The result arrived at by Lieutenant Symonds—an English officer, who had by a course of trigonometrical calculation determined the depression to be thirteen hundred and twelve feet—had excited surprise among scientific men. It was a matter of interest, therefore, to test this conclusion. A series of levels was, consequently, carried across the country by this detachment from Lieut. Lynch's party, which occupied twenty-three days in the slow and laborious process. The result, however, was gratifying. The difference between the level of the Dead Sea and that of the Mediterranean was found to be almost precisely what Lieut. Symonds had stated.

For a full account of this entire expedition, the reader is referred to Lieutenant Lynch's published volume.

In the history of our navy, may also with propriety be mentioned the creditable though unsuccessful expedition to the Polar Seas, during the years 1850-51, in search of the long absent party of Sir John Franklin. This was an individual and not a national enterprise. The means for its prosecution were furnished by Mr. Henry Grinnell, a wealthy and philanthropic merchant of New York city. The vessels furnished were two small brigs, the *Advance* of 140 tons, and the *Rescue* of 90 tons. They were merchantmen, but were strengthened for this service. By a special act of Congress, they were placed under the direction of the Navy Board, and were subjected consequently to the usual regulations and discipline of the service. The officer selected for the command was Lieutenant E. H. De Haven, who had been attached to the Exploring Expedition under Commander Wilkes. The selection proved a very judicious one.

On the 23d of May, 1850, the expedition sailed from New York, and without any particular adventures, began to meet masses of ice in Melville Bay about midsummer. The *Rescue* was here thrown into a very perilous situation. A mass of ice slid under her, and lifting her bodily from the water, careened her over nearly on her beam-ends, in which position she remained some sixty hours before they were able to right her again. Their progress was now continued only by boldly pushing through the icebergs and floes, until, finally, they emerged into the open waters of Lancaster Sound. Here, overtaken by a very severe gale, the vessels were separated, but were happy in meeting again a few days after. Thus, until the month of September, they continued their perilous course to the westward, when they reached 96° west longitude. As winter was now approaching, and the ice barrier beyond was entirely impenetrable, the vessels were turned to the eastward to find more genial quarters during the long polar night. The hopes of the navigators in this respect were, however, disappointed, for they soon became firmly locked between large masses of floating ice, and were carried by an irresistible tide to the northward, up Wellington Channel. Winter in all its rigor now came on. The sun no longer showed his disk above the horizon and the thermometer indicated 40° below zero. The *Rescue* was now deserted, and both crews took up their abode on board the *Advance*, which was made quite comfortable with the means which had been lavishly provided. The mental and physical energy of the men was maintained by daily and vigorous exercise in the open air, and by pleasing entertainments on board the vessel. For eleven weeks the sun was invisible. Yet the aspect of nature was not wholly gloomy—they were delighted and cheered by frequent views of the splendors of the polar sky.

After having drifted some distance up Wellington channel, they found that the tide had changed, and that they were floating back again under the influence of the same mighty force which had borne them onward. They thus passed out of Wellington Channel, through Barrow's Straits and into Lancaster Sound. It should be borne in mind, also, that during all this time the ice was constantly shifting and threatening the vessels momentarily with destruction. Constantly anxious and vigilant, the exposed navigators were ready at any moment to leave their ships, for it seemed

impossible that they could sustain such an enormous pressure. At one time they stood upon the ice, with their sleds loaded with provisions, and waiting for the final crash which would demolish their home and leave them on the treacherous ice-fields ninety miles from land. After December, however, the ice became solid, and they were relieved from this source of danger. Thus through the entire winter they floated along the southern shore of Baffin's Bay and Davis' Straits, until the 5th of June, when with fearful suddenness the ice broke up into floating pieces, extending as far as the eye could reach. They finally emerged into a clear sea, having reached the entrance of Davis' Straits and passed to the south of the Arctic circle. They had thus drifted helplessly in the firm embrace of the ice, from the last of September till the first of June.

Nothing daunted, they again turned toward the north, with the intention of prosecuting their search through another summer. But in the route which they took, the impediments were so serious and dangerous that the attempt at farther explorations was abandoned. The *Advance* arrived at New York on the 30th of September, and the *Rescue* came in shortly after, when the vessels were resigned by the Navy Department into the hands of their owner.

This expedition failed, as have all those fitted out from England also, in the attainment of its main object. The only traces of the party of Sir John Franklin, which were found, were discovered on the 27th of August, 1850, by the united English and American expeditions at Beechy Cape, on the east side of the entrance to Wellington Channel. These traces consisted of several articles which could be identified as belonging to Franklin's ships, and also of three graves, with head-boards bearing the names of those interred, who were sailors attached to the absent expedition. The last date thus inscribed was April 3d, 1846. The movements and the fate of Franklin beyond this point and this period are entirely unknown. Though disappointed in solving the painful mystery which still hangs over the condition or the end of the bold English explorer, those concerned in the American attempt to throw light upon the interesting question have the satisfaction of feeling, that they have made a generous effort in behalf of a stranger and a foreigner.

At the present time, 1853, the resources of the Navy are directed in quite an unusual degree to projects which contemplate the safety and the extension of American commerce and the maintenance of the rights of humanity. The most prominent of these projects is that which has in view the establishment of commercial relations with the empire of Japan. The government of that large nation has for a long period denied to other nations, with a most insignificant exception, all access into its ports or territory; has refused hospitality and succor to unfortunate mariners, and has treated with great cruelty such citizens of the United States, as well as those of other countries, as have been cast by shipwreck upon the well-guarded shores. It has been therefore deemed obligatory by the government of the United States, to make an attempt to obtain from this jealous and secluded people, a recognition and observance of the rights of humanity, and also to induce them, if possible, to abandon their present absurd commercial policy. The extension of the territory of the United States along the shore of the Pacific, and the presence of a large whaling fleet

in the seas which surround Japan, make these objects highly important. A squadron of unusual size has consequently been placed under the orders of Commodore Matthew C. Perry, the Commander-in-chief on the East India station. It consists of the steam frigate *Mississippi* 10, flag-ship; steam frigate *Susquehanna* 9; steam frigate *Powhatan* 9; sloops-of-war *Macedonian* 20, *Plymouth* 20, *Saratoga* 20, *Vandalia* 20; and store-ship *Supply* 4.*

An expedition is also under orders to sail, for the purpose of thoroughly exploring and surveying the China seas, the North Pacific, and Behring's Straits. This expedition will probably be absent three years or upward. It is under the command of Commander Cadwallader Ringgold, an officer who has acquired a high reputation in connection with the former Exploring Expedition under Commander Charles Wilkes. It consists of the sloop-of-war *Vincennes* 20; brig *Porpoise* 10; both of which vessels were engaged in the first Exploring Expedition; the steamer *John Hancock* 3; and schooner *Fenimore Cooper* 3, a pilot-boat, purchased for this particular service.

An expedition for the exploration and survey of the River La Plata, and its tributaries, which have lately been opened to foreign commerce, has also been undertaken. For this purpose the steamer *Water Witch* 2, has been placed under the command of Lieutenant Thomas J. Page.

Commander William F. Lynch, who conducted the expedition to the Jordan and the Dead Sea, is also under orders to make preparatory explorations on the western coast of Africa, in view of an expedition designed to penetrate into the unknown regions lying to the eastward of Liberia. The small steamer *Vixen* 3, has been ordered to join the African squadron, in order to facilitate the operations of Commander Lynch.

The condition of the Navy at the present time in respect to vessels and officers, is as follows:

Eleven ships-of-the-line, one of 120 guns, and the remainder of 74 guns each. Of these, four are on the stocks, four are in ordinary, and three are in commission as receiving-ships.

One razee of 54 guns. Twelve frigates of the first class, rating 44 guns each. One frigate rating 36 guns.

Sixteen sloops-of-war, 20 guns each, one of 18 guns, and four of 16 guns each.

Four brigs, of 10 guns each. Four schooners mounting in all seven guns.

Five steam frigates, one of 10 guns, two of 9 guns each, and two of 6 guns each.

Eleven steamers of the first and second class, with armaments of ten guns down to one gun.

Five store-ships, two of 6, and three of 4 guns.

The officers of the various grades are:

Sixty-eight captains; Commodore Charles Stewart being now at the

* The line-of battle ship *Vermont* 74 was also put in commission to be connected with this expedition, but she has not been able to go to sea in consequence in part of the present difficulty of obtaining seamen for the Navy, and also because it is discovered that to man her will raise the number of men employed in this branch of the service above the full complement which is now allowed by law.

head of the list. Ninety-seven commanders; three hundred and twenty-seven lieutenants; sixty-nine surgeons; forty passed assistant-surgeons; thirty-seven assistant-surgeons; sixty-three pursers; twenty-four chaplains; twelve professors of mathematics; fourteen masters in the line of promotion; one hundred and ninety-seven passed-midshipmen; one hundred and ninety-eight midshipmen. Petty officers, comprising masters, boatswains, gunners, carpenters, and sailmakers, about two hundred.

The marine corps comprises one colonel, who is a brigadier-general by brevet; four staff-officers; one lieutenant-colonel; four majors; fifteen captains; twenty first-lieutenants; and twenty second-lieutenants. The steam service possesses one engineer-in-chief; thirteen chief-engineers; eighteen first-assistants; thirty-four second-assistants; and thirty-four third-assistants.





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